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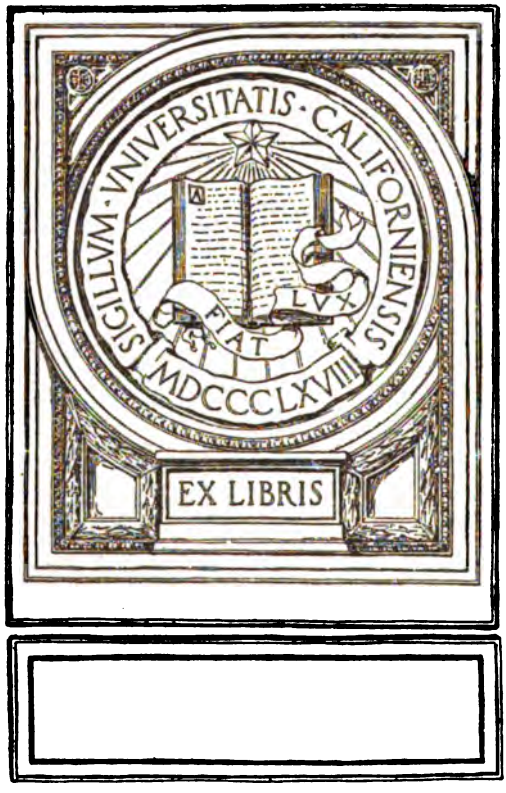

Martinus Luther

MARTIN LUTHER

BY

GUSTAV FREYTAG

TRANSLATED BY

HENRY E. O. HEINEMANN

DES CHRISTEN HERZ AUF ROSEN GEHT,
WENN'S MITTEN UNTERM KREUZE STEHT.
—LUTHER'S MOTTO.

SECOND EDITION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Reformer	1
Luther's Father	5
The Spirit of the Age	8
The Traffic in Indulgences	13
Luther the Monk	24
The Rupture with the Church	28
The Conflict	33
Battles Within and Battles Without	40
Accepting the Summons	45
The Diet of Worms	50
The Hero of the Nation	60
The Outlaw of the Wartburg	69
A Contemporary's Description of Luther	74
Problems and Tasks	83
Political and Social Complications	92
Luther's Marriage	97
Luther's Private Life	104
Struggles with the Devil	113
The Tragic Element in Luther's Life	117
A Letter of Luther to the Prince-Elector of Saxony	123

294663

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	BETWEEN PAGES
Frontispiece. Martinus Luther. (After Lucas Cranach.)	
Title-page. Luther's Coat of Arms, being a cross upon a rose, illustrating Luther's motto.	
Luther as a Chorister in the House of Frau Cotta . .	6 and 7
Fac-simile of an Indulgence. (From Köstlin.) . . .	12 " 13
The Pope Selling Indulgences. (Hans Holbein's wood-cut.)	16 " 17
Trade in Pardons. (Title picture of a pamphlet by Hans Schwalb, published in 1521.)	16 " 17
Tetzel. (Reproduced from Castelar's "La revolucion religiosa.")	20 " 21
Luther Entering the Monastery. (After Gustav König.)	24 " 25
Luther as a Monk. (After the woodcut of Lucas Cranach.)	26 " 27
Nailing the Theses to the Church door. (Reproduced from Castelar's "La revolucion religiosa.") . .	28 " 29
Luther Lecturing at the University. (After Gustav König.)	30 " 31
Philip Melanchthon	32 " 33
Pope Leo X.	34 " 35
Erasmus	36 " 37
Burning the Papal Bull. (After Lessing.)	44 " 45
Luther's Entrance into Worms. (After Spangenberg.)	48 " 49
Ready to Face the Diet. (After Gustav König.) . .	50 " 51
Before the Diet of Worms. (After Werner.) . . .	52 " 53

BETWEEN PAGES

Frederick the Wise, Prince-Elector of Saxony. (After Albrecht Dürer.) . . . . . 56 " 57
The Wartburg in the Sixteenth Century. (Woodcut by H. W. Müller.) . . . . . 68 " 69
The Outlaw of the Wartburg . . . . . 72 " 73
Luther as Younker George. (After the woodcut of Lucas Cranach) . . . . . 76 " 77
Luther's Wife. (After Lucas Cranach.) . . . . . 96 " 97
Luther Praying for Melanchthon's Life. (After Gustav König.) . . . . . 104 " 105
Luther at the Coffin of his Daughter Magdalen. (After Gustav König.) . . . . . 106 " 107
Luther in the Bosom of his Family. (After Spangenberg.) . . . . . 108 " 109
The Age of the Reformation. (After Kaulbach.) . . 122 " 123
Luther's Handwriting. (Psalm 34.) [A manuscript page of his Bible translation, now in the Library at Berlin.] . . . . . 124 " 125

THE REFORMER.

MANY well-meaning men still cherish regret that certain great evils of their old church led to the great schism of the Reformation. Even the enlightened Catholic still looks upon Luther and Zwingli simply as zealous heretics whose wrath caused ecclesiastical dissensions. Such a view should be abandoned. All Christian denominations have good reason to be grateful to Luther, for to him they owe a purified faith which satisfies the heart and soul and enriches their lives. The heretic of Wittenberg is a reformer for the Catholic quite as much as for the Protestant. Not only because in the struggle with him the teachers of the Catholic Church outgrew their ancient scholasticism and fought for their sacraments with new weapons taken from his language, culture, and moral worth; nor only for the reason that he had shattered into fragments the church of the middle ages, and compelled his enemies in the Council of Trent to erect an apparently new and more solid structure within the old forms and dimensions; but still more because he gave such powerful expression to the common foundation of all Christian creeds, to human bravery, piety, sincerity and heartiness, that in religion and language, in civil order and morality, in the bent of

the popular soul, in science and poetry, a great deal of his nature is even now immanent in us and shared by all Teutonic races to-day. Some of those things which in his stubborn fights Luther defended against both reformed and Catholics, have been condemned by the freer intelligence of the present age. His doctrine, wrung from a passionate, high-strung, reverential soul in convulsive struggles, failed, in some not unimportant particulars, to hit the right point; at times he was harsh, unjust, even cruel towards his adversaries; but such things should no longer perplex us, for all the limitations of his nature and culture are overwhelmed by the wealth of bliss which flowed from his great heart into the life of mankind.

Nevertheless, we are told, he should not have fallen away from the church; his act divided Christendom into two camps, and, with varying battle cries, the old quarrel lasts down into our own days. Those who think thus may assert with equal justice that the holy, mystical apostasy from Judaism was not necessary; why did not the Apostles reform the venerable high-priesthood of Zion? They may maintain that the Englishman Hampden would have done better to pay the ship-money and instruct the Stuarts peaceably; that the Prince of Orange committed a crime when he refused to lay his head and sword, like Egmont, into the hands of Alva; that Washington was a traitor because he did not surrender himself and his army to the English. They may condemn as a crime everything great and new in thought and life that ever broke forth in the struggle against the old.

To few mortals was it given to exercise so great an influence upon both their contemporaries and posterity.

But, like every great human life, that of Luther impresses the beholder like an overwhelming tragedy if the chief points of it are placed side by side. It appears tripartite, like the careers of all heroes of history who were permitted to reach the fulness of their lives. In the beginning, the personality of the man is unfolding, and we see him powerfully controlled by the forces of his environments. Even incompatible opposites are sought to be assimilated, but in the inmost core of his nature, thoughts and convictions gradually harden into resolution; a sudden deed flashes forth, the individual enters on the struggle with the world. Then follows another period of vigorous activity, rapid development, great conquests. The influence of the one upon the many extends more and more, his might draws the nation into his course, he becomes her hero, her standard, and the vitality of millions appears concentrated in one man. But the spirit of a nation will not, for any length of time, tolerate the exclusive control of one single individual. However great the force, however lofty the aims, the life, the power, and the wants of the nation are more manifold. The everlasting conflict between the man and the people appears. The soul even of the people is finite, and, in the sight of the infinite, a limited personality, but as compared to the individual it appears boundless. The man is compelled by the logical sequence of his thoughts and actions, all the spirits of his own deeds force him into a rigidly confined course. The soul of the nation, however, requires for its life incompatible opposites and a ceaseless working in the most divergent directions. Many things which the individual could not receive within his own nature arise to do battle against

him. The reaction of the world sets in—feebly at first, from various sides, in different lines of thought, with little justice, then more strongly and with ever-growing success. At last, the spiritual kernel of the individual life is confined within a school—his school; it is crystallised into a particular element of the culture of the nation. Ever is the closing part of a great life filled with secret resignation, bitterness, and silent suffering.

Thus with Luther. The first of these periods extended down to the day when he published the theses, the second to his return from the Wartburg, the third to his death and the beginning of the Smalkald war.

The author of these pages does not intend to describe Luther's life, but only to tell briefly how he grew and what he was. Many things about him appear strange and uncouth, when viewed at a distance, but his picture has the remarkable quality of becoming bigger and more lovable the closer it is approached. And it would, from beginning to end, fill a good biographer with admiration, sympathy, and also some good humor.

LUTHER'S FATHER.

LUTHER rose from the great fountain of all national strength, the free peasantry. From Moehra, a village in the mountain forests of Thuringia, where his relations filled half the surrounding country, his father moved northward into the Mansfeld region to engage in mining.

His father, Hans Luther, was short of stature, solid and strong, resolute and gifted with an unusual amount of common sense, and had, after a hard struggle, acquired a fair competency. He ruled strictly in his house. Even late in life Luther remembered ruefully the severe punishments he suffered as a boy, and the pain they inflicted on his tender child's heart.

Old Hans Luther maintained some influence over the life of his son down to the time of his death in 1530. When, at the age of twenty-two years, Martin secretly entered a monastery, the old man's anger was violent, for he had thought of providing for his son by a good marriage. And when, at last, friends succeeded in reconciling the irate father, when he confronted his son, who pleaded that a terrible apparition had compelled him to the secret vow to enter a monastery, the father broke out into the petulant

words: "May God grant, that it was not a cheat or a spectre sent by the Devil."

He still further tore the heart of the monk by the angry question: "You thought to obey the bidding of God when you took orders, did you not also hear that children should obey their parents?" The sting of the words rankled deeply in the heart of the son. And many years later, when he lived on the Wartburg, expelled from the church, outlawed by the Emperor, he wrote to his father the pathetic words: "Do you still wish to take me from the monkish life? You are still my father; I am still your son; on your side is the divine commandment and the power, on mine is human wrong-doing. And lo, that you might not boast before God He anticipated you, He took me out Himself!" From that time, the old man felt as if his son had been given back to him. Old Hans at one time calculated on a grandson for whom he wanted to work. He reverted to that idea stubbornly, disregarding the rest of the world. Before long he urged his son to marry, and his persuasion was not the least powerful influence to which Luther yielded. And when the father, having reached a ripe old age and the honor of a councilman of Mansfeld, was lying on his death-bed and the minister, bending over the man who was passing away, asked if he would die in the purified faith on Christ and the Holy Gospel, old Hans gathered his strength for the last time and said, curtly: "A scoundrel who does not believe in it!" Luther, in telling about it in later years, was wont to add admiringly: "He was a man of the good old time."

The son received the news of his father's death in the

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LUTHER AS A CHORISTER IN THE HOUSE OF FRAU COTTA.

fortress of Coburg. Gazing at the letter in which his wife had enclosed the picture of his youngest daughter, Magdalen, he spoke to his companions only the brief words: "Well, my father is dead, too," then rising and taking his psalter, he went to his chamber and prayed and wept so hard that, as the faithful Veit Dietrich reports, his head was dull the next day—but he came forth with his mind composed. The same day he wrote to Melanchthon with much emotion about the cordial affection of the father and his intimate intercourse with him. "Never have I despised death so much as to-day. So many times do we die before we finally die. Now I am the oldest of my race and I have a right to follow him."

From such a father the son received for his life those qualities which remained the foundation of his nature—truthfulness, persevering will, a sincere confidence in, and prudent treatment of, men and affairs. Rough was his infancy, much that was harsh did he experience in the Latin school and as a chorister, but he also met with kindness and love, especially in the house of Frau Cotta. And Luther retained that which is more easily preserved in the smaller circles of life, a heart full of faith in the goodness of human nature and of reverence for all that is great on this earth. At the University of Erfurt his father was able to assist him more liberally; he felt the vigor of youth and was a merry companion with harp and song.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

THE corruption of the world had waxed huge, the oppression of the poor was beyond endurance, gross sensuality held sway, clergy and laity were dominated by insatiable greed. Who would punish the young squire for ill-treating the peasant? Who protect the poor citizen against the powerful family of the rich councilman? Hard was the toil of the man of the people from morning till night, through winter and summer. There was the plague, failure of crops, and famine. Inscrutable the order of the world, and a dearth of love in the life on earth. Salvation from misery was in God alone. Before Him all the things of the earth were petty and as naught; Emperor and Pope and the wisdom of man were transient as the flowers of the fields. If God was merciful he could save man from the troubles of this life and compensate him by everlasting bliss for his sufferings here below. But how could such grace be won? What virtue of weak humanity durst hope to earn the infinite treasure of divine favor? Man was damned from the time of Adam to will the good and work the evil. Vain was his best virtue; he was cursed with original sin, and it was through no merit of his own if God showed him mercy.

In such wise the human heart wrestled in anguish in those days. But forth from the sacred documents of the Scripture, which were to the people as a dark legend, there sounded from afar the word: "Christ is Love." The ruling church knew little of such love. In its creed, God stood far removed from the human soul, the image of Him on the Cross was hidden behind countless saints and blessed martyrs, all of whom were needed to intercede with the wrathful God. Yet the nature of the Teuton fervently demanded a cordial relation with the Almighty, he yearned with irrepressible force to win the love of God. He who gave himself to penance, wrestling in ardent prayer and without cessation for the love of God, could feel the highest happiness in merging, yielding himself to God while on earth, and had the hope of bliss in heaven. But the hierarchy no longer taught individual endeavor for the grace of God. The Pope claimed to be the administrator of the inexhaustible deserts of Christ, and the church taught that the prayers of the saints for sinful humanity had helped to pile up an infinite treasure of good works, prayers, fasts, and penances for the good of others, all of which treasures were administered by the Pope, who could give of them to whomsoever he wished to free from sin. And, likewise, if a number of the faithful would associate themselves together in a pious society, the Pope could grant to such a brotherhood the dispensation that the deserts of the saints and the surplus of pious devotional works, prayers, masses, pilgrimages, penances, donations, might pass from one to another.

Thus there arose, under the patronage of mediating saints, the pious brotherhoods in which association could

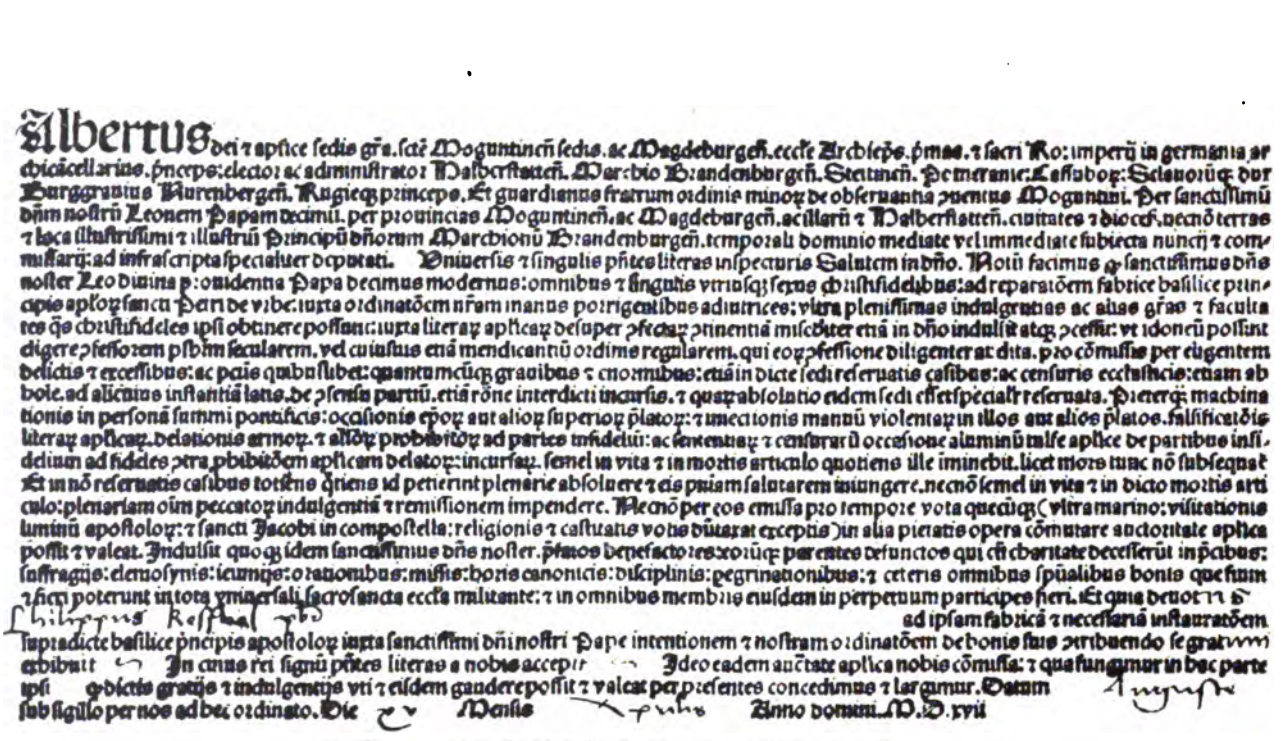
effect that which was impossible for the weak individual. Their number was great. As late as 1530 Luther complains that they are innumerable. How crude and wretched was their mechanism may be shown by an example, selecting the brotherhood of the 11,000 virgins, called St. Ursula's Ship, of which Prince-Elector Frederick the Wise was a founder and charter member. According to its constitution, this society had collected in spiritual treasures that were to help the brethren in acquiring eternal bliss, the following articles: 6,455 masses, 3,550 full psalters, 200,000 rosaries, 200,000 *Te Deums*, 1,600 *Gloria in Excelsis Deo;* furthermore, 11,000 prayers for the patroness St. Ursula, and 630 times 11,000 *Paternosters* and *Ave-Marias;* also, for the knights, 50 times 10,000 *Paternosters* and *Ave-Marias*, etc. The entire power of this treasure for salvation was for the benefit of the members of the brotherhood. Many spiritual institutions and private individuals had earned especial merit by large contributions to the treasure of prayers. Upon the reorganisation of the society, Prince-Elector Frederick donated a fine silver Ursula. A layman earned membership if, in the course of his life, he once said 11,000 *Paternosters* and *Ave-Marias*. If he spoke thirty-two a day he earned it in a year; if sixteen, in two years; if eight, in four years. If one was prevented from absolving this quantity of prayer by marriage, business concerns, or illness, he could join by having eleven masses read for himself, etc. Still, this fraternity was one of the best, for the members were not required to pay cash; it was meant to be a society of poor people who wanted to help one another to Heaven by praying. And yet, after all is said, it cannot be denied that

these pious societies, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, touched the soul more nearly than anything else that the decaying church of the Middle Ages offered to the people. On the other hand, the traffic in pardons and indulgences was the foulest spot on the sick body of the church. In their capacity as conservators of the accumulated infinite treasures of Christ's merits, the Popes sold orders on this treasury to the faithful for money. True, the better idea that even the Pope could not really forgive sins, but only remit the penance prescribed by the church, never quite disappeared in the church itself. But those who thus taught, isolated men of the universities or candid ministers of scattered congregations, did well to take care not to develop their teachings into open contradiction against the business of the traffickers in pardons. For what was the true doctrine of the church to the Popes of the fifteenth century, who, almost without exception, were atrocious villains and unbelieving heathens? Woe to him who doubted that the Popes had the right to part him from God, to open or close to him the gates of Heaven! It was money they demanded without end, money for women and boys, for their children and relations, for their princely households. And there prevailed an awful community of self-interest between themselves, the bishops, and the fanatical party in the begging fraternities. Nothing made Huss of Hussinetz so insufferable as his fight against pardons and indulgences. The doctrine of repentance and grace drove the great Wessel from Paris into an unhappy exile, and it was pardon-mongering monks that allowed the venerable Johannes Vesalia to die in the dungeon of the monastery at Mayence, him who

first uttered the great words, "Wherefore should I believe that which I know?"

It is well known how rankly the traffic in pardons and indulgences grew early in the sixteenth century and how shamelessly the infamous swindle was carried on. When Tetzel entered a city with his box he rode with a great suite of monks and priests, a well-fed, haughty Dominican. The bells were tolled, clergy and laity went reverently to meet him and conducted him to the church. There, in the nave, his great red cross was erected with the wreath of thorns and the nail holes, and sometimes the faithful people were favored with the sight of the red blood of the Crucified Christ moving on the cross. Next to the wreath were the flags of the church bearing the coat-of-arms of the Pope with the threefold crown; before the cross stood the notorious chest strongly enforced with iron bands; on one side a pulpit on which the monk with rude eloquence explained the miraculous power of his indulgences and exhibited a great parchment of the Pope from which dangled many seals; on the other side the money table with blank pardons, writing material, and money baskets, and there it was that the clerical assistants sold eternal bliss to the people crowding around.

The evils in the church were without number; against all of them an outraged moral sense revolted, but the centre of the whole movement was the fight against the means of grace which made a loathsome mockery of the needs of the popular heart. And the appearance of so many reformers will be understood aright only if it is looked upon as a reaction of the heart against insincerity, heartlessness, and continued outrage upon the holiest ideals.



Albertus dei ⁊ aplice sedis gr̃a. scãe Moguntinen̄ sedis. ac Magdeburgen. eccle Archiepꝰ. ꝓmas. ⁊ sacri Ro: imperij in germania ar chicancellarius. ꝓnceps: elector ac administrator ⁊ Halberstatten̄. Marchio Brandenburgen̄. Stetinen̄. Pomeranie: Cassubo⁊: Sclauorũq; dux Burggrauius Nurembergen̄. Rugiecq; princeps. Et guardianus fratrum ordinis minoꝝ de obseruantia ꝑmotus Moguntini. Per sanctissimũ dñm nostrũ Leonem Papam decimũ. per prouincias Moguntinen̄. ac Magdeburgen̄. ecclarũ ⁊ Halberstatten̄. ciuitates ⁊ dioceses. necnõ terras ⁊ loca illustrissimi ⁊ illustrũ Principũ dñorum Marchionũ Brandenburgen̄. temporali dominio mediate vel immediate subiecta nunciꝰ ⁊ commissarij: ad infrascripta specialiter deputati. Vniuersis ⁊ singulis ꝓsentes literas inspecturis Salutem in dño. Notũ facimus q̃ sanctissimus dñs noster Leo diuina ꝓuidentia Papa decimus modernus: omnibus ⁊ singulis viris⁊q; fœne christifidelibus: ad reparationem fabrice basilice principis apl̃oꝝ sancti Petri de vrbe: iuxta ordinatõem nr̃am manus porrigentibus adiutrices: vitra plenissimas indulgentias ac alias gr̃as ⁊ facultates q̃ christifideles ipsi obtinere possunt: iuxta literaꝝ aplicaꝝ desuper ꝓfectaꝝ ꝓtinentia misebiter etiã in dño indulsit atq; ꝓcessit: vt idoneũ possint diligere confessorem ꝓbum secularem. vel cuiuslibet etiã mendicantiũ ordinis regularem. qui eoꝝ confessione diligenter audita. ꝓ cõmissis per eũgentem delictis ⁊ excessibus: ac pœis quibuslibet: quantumcũq; grauibus ⁊ enormibus: etiã in dicte sedi reseruatis casibus: ac censuris ecclasticis: etiam ab hole. ad aliorsus instantiã late. de ꝓsentis partiũ. etiã rõne interdicti incursis. ⁊ quaꝝ absolutio eidem sedi esset specialiter reseruata. Preterq; machinationis in personã summi pontificis: occasionis eiꝰq; aut aliorꝝ superiorꝝ ꝓlatorꝝ: ⁊ invectionis manũ violentaꝝ in illos aut alios ꝓlatos. falsificationis literaꝝ aplicaꝝ. delationis armorꝝ. ⁊ aliorꝝ prohibitorꝝ ad partes infidelium: ac sententiaꝝ ⁊ censurarũ occasione aluminũ falso aplice de partibus infidelium ad fideles ꝓra ꝓhibitõem aplicam delatorꝝ incursaꝝ. semel in vita ⁊ in mortis articulo quotiens ille imminebit. licet mors tunc nõ subsequat Et in nõ reseruatis casibus totiens q̃ties ipsi vel petierint plenarie absoluere ⁊ eis pariam salutarem iniungere. necnõ semel in vita ⁊ in dicto mortis articulo: plenariam oĩm peccatorꝝ indulgentiã ⁊ remissionem impendere. Necnõ per eos emissa ꝓ tempore vota quecũq; (vltra marino: visitationis luminũ apostolorꝝ: ⁊ sancti Jacobi in compostella: religionis ⁊ castitatis vouis dũtaxat exceptis) in alia pietatis opera cõmutare auctoritate aplica possit ⁊ valeat. Indulsit quoq; idem sanctissimus dñs noster. ꝓlatos de facto tes xoũq; per eos defunctos qui cũ charitate decesserũ in peccatis: suffragijs: elemosynis: ieunijs: orationibus: missis: horis canonicis: disciplinis: peregrinationibus: ⁊ ceteris omnibus spũalibus bonis que fuerunt ⁊ fieri poterunt in tota vniuersali sacrosancta eccla militante: ⁊ in omnibus membris eiusdem in perpetuum participes fieri. Et quia deuotꝰ ꝯ ad ipsam fabricã ⁊ necessaria instaurationem supradicte basilice ꝓncipis apostolorꝝ iuxta sanctissimi dñi nostri Pape intentionem ⁊ nostram ordinatõem de bonis suis ꝓ ut debuendo se gratum exhibuit ꝯ In cuius rei signũ ꝑtes literas a nobis accepit ꝯ Ideo eadem auctate aplica nobis cõmissa: ⁊ qua fungimur in hac parte ipsi ꝙdictis gratijs ⁊ indulgentijs vti ⁊ eisdem gaudere possit ⁊ valeat ꝑ ꝓsentes concedimus ⁊ largimur. Datum sub sigillo per nos ad hec ordinato. Die ꝯ Mensis Anno domini. M. D. xvii

¶ Forma absolutionis totiens quotiens in vita.

Misereatur tui. ac. Dñs noster Jesus christus per meritum sue passionis te absoluat: auctate cuius ⁊ aplica mihi in hac parte cõmissa: ⁊ tibi concessa: ego te absoluo ab omnibus peccatis tuis. In nomine patris ⁊ filij ⁊ spiritus sancti Amen.

Forma absolutionis et plenissime remissionis: semel in vita et in mortis articulo.

Misereatur tui ꝛc. Dñs noster Jesus christus p meritũ sue passionis te absoluat: ⁊ ego auctate ipsius ⁊ aplica mihi in hac parte cõmissa: ⁊ tibi ꝓcessa te absoluo, primo ab omni sentẽtia excõicationis maioris vel minoris si quã incurristi. deinde ab oibus pctis tuis: ꝓ remedio tibi plenissimã oĩm paõꝝ tuoꝝ remissionem. remittendo tibi etiã penas purgatorij inquantũlibet claues sãcte matris eccle extendũt. In nõe ꝑris ⁊ filij ⁊ spũssancti Amen.

FAC-SIMILE OF AN INDULGENCE. (From Köstlin.)

THE TRAFFIC IN INDULGENCES.

THROUGHOUT Northern Europe opposition was stirring. But the man was not yet found who was destined to feel in fearful, long-continued struggle within his own soul all the sufferings and all the yearnings of the people, in order to become the leader in whom they saw with enthusiasm the embodiment of their own inmost nature. We know little of the struggles which Luther underwent prior to the time when he entered the monastery. They hardened his convictions until his soul was matured and ready to speak out boldly. But it is probably fair to judge by analogy, and happily we have direct information of an experience which was doubtless similar to that of Luther and typical of what was passing, with greater or less clearness of insight, in the popular mind in general.

Frederick Mecum, latinised Myconius, was the son of a respectable citizen of Lichtenfels, in Upper Franconia, born in 1491. At the age of thirteen years he was sent to the Latin school of the then rising mountain city of Annaberg. He there experienced what is here told in his own words, and, in 1510, a youth of nineteen years, went into a monastery. Being a Franciscan, he was one of

the earliest, most zealous and loyal adherents of the professors of Wittenberg. He left the order, became a preacher of the reformed church in Thuringia, finally parson and overseer at Gotha, where he carried the Reformation through and died in 1546.

The relation of Myconius to Luther was curious. He not only was a modest and intimate friend of the latter's in many relations of private life, but his friendship with Luther was filled until death with a poetic charm that transfigured his entire life. In the most fateful time of his youth, seven years before Luther began the Reformation, the image of the great man appeared to him in a dream and calmed the doubts of his agitated heart, and it was in the transfiguration of that dream that the faithful, pious scholar thenceforth saw his great friend at all hours.

Still another circumstance lends peculiar interest to the personality of Myconius. Although the gentle, delicately organised man was totally unlike his daring friend, there is a remarkable similarity in the early lives of the two. And many things that remain unknown in Luther's youth are explained by what Myconius tells of his own early years. Both were poor scholars of a Latin school, both were driven into monasteries by inward struggles and youthful enthusiasm, both failed to find that peace which they fervently sought, but found, instead, fresh doubts, greater struggles, years of torment, of anxious uncertainty. Both were driven to revolt by the insolent Tetzel, who inflamed their souls with indignation and determined the entire direction and activity of their subsequent lives. At last, both died in the same year, Myconius seven weeks later than Luther, after having been, five

years before, recalled to life from a deadly illness by a conjuring letter from Luther.

Although he published little, Frederick Myconius left, besides theological writings, a chronicle of his time in which his own activity and the affairs of Gotha are described most minutely. The dream which he had the first night after entering the monastery is well known and has been printed frequently. The Apostle Paul, who then appeared as his guide, had the face and voice of Luther, as Myconius thought in after years. This long dream is told in Latin. The introductory narrative, however, has been preserved in a manuscript of the ducal library of Gotha in a contemporaneous German form. The following has been translated from the manuscript, being shortened only in a few places:

"Johannes Tetzel, of Pirna, in Meissen, a Dominican monk, was a great crier and trader in indulgences or pardons of the Pope of Rome. He remained, with this purpose, for two years in the new city of Annaberg, and so deluded the people that they all believed there was no other way to gain pardon for their sins and everlasting life than justification by our works, which justification, he said, nevertheless was impossible. But he said there was one way remaining, namely, to buy it for money from the Pope of Rome, that is, to buy the indulgence of the Pope, which, he said, was forgiveness of sins and a sure entry into everlasting life. Here I could tell wonder upon wonder and incredible things about what preachings I heard those two years at Annaberg from Tetzel. For I attended his preaching diligently, and he preached every day. I even could repeat his sermons to others, with all gestures

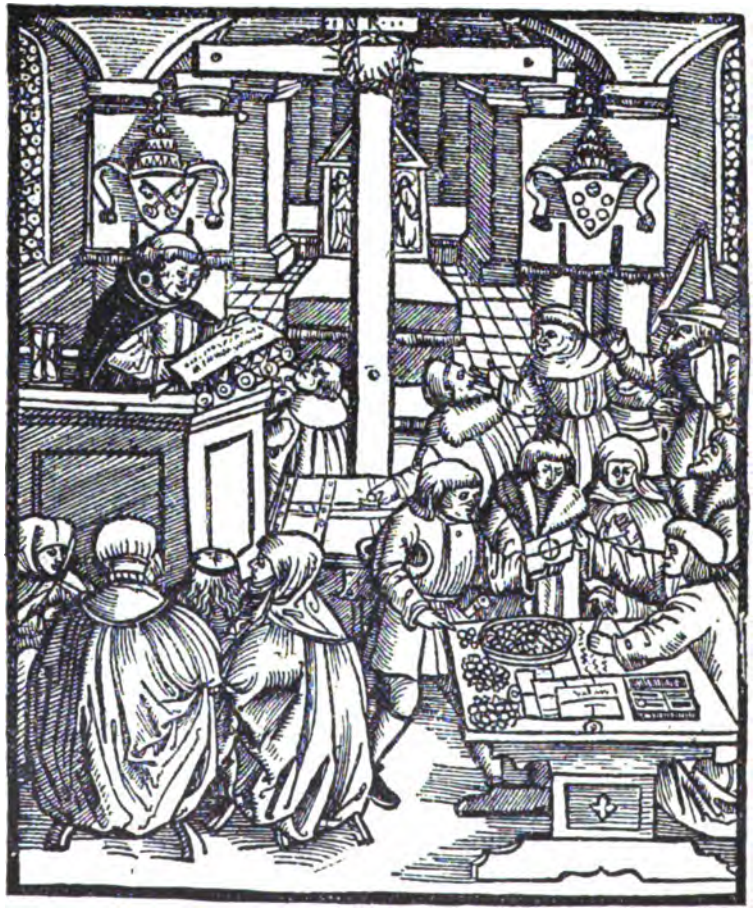
and explanations, not scoffing at him, but being greatly in earnest. For I held all his utterances to be oracles and divine sayings which must be believed, and that which came from the Pope I held as though it came from Christ himself.

"Finally, about the time of Pentecost, in the year of our Lord, 1510, he threatened to lay down the red cross and close the gate of Heaven and extinguish the sun, and it would never happen again that for so little money could be had forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. Yea, it was not to be hoped that so long as the world stood, such graciousness of the Pope would come there again. He also urged that every one should care well for the salvation of his own soul and those of his friends, both deceased and living, for now had come the day of salvation and the pleasing time. And he said: 'Let no one neglect his own salvation, for unless you have the letters of the Pope you cannot be absolved and pronounced free by any man from many sins and "reserved cases."' On the gates and the walls of the church were publicly posted printed letters in which it was stated that in order to give the people a testimonial of gratitude for its devotion, thenceforth the letters of pardon and complete power should not be sold so high as in the beginning, and at the end of the letter, at the bottom, was written: '*Pauperibus dentur gratis*'—to the poor the letters of pardon should be given for nothing, without money, for the sake of God.

"Thereupon I began to bargain with the commissioners of this traffic in pardons, but, in truth, I was

CALIFORNIA

THE POPE SELLING INDULGENCES. (Hans Holbein's woodcut.)



TRADE IN PARDONS. (Frontispiece of a pamphlet by Hans Schwalb, published in 1521.)

moved and impelled thereto by the Holy Ghost, although I knew not, at the time, what I did.

"My dear father taught me in my childhood the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Christian Faith, and compelled me to pray at all times. For he said we had everything from God alone, *gratis*, for nothing, and He would govern and lead us if we prayed diligently. Of the indulgences and Roman pardons, he said they were only nets with which money was filched and taken out of the pockets of the simple-minded, and men could surely not buy or bring about forgiveness of sins and everlasting life with money. But the priests and clergy became angry and scolded when such things were said. Since, then, I heard nothing in the sermons every day but the great glory of the pardons, I remained in doubt which to believe more, my dear father or the priests as teachers of the church. I stood in doubt, but still I believed more the priests than the instructions of my father. But one thing I would not allow, that the forgiveness of sins could not be obtained except when it was bought with money, particularly by the poor. Hence I was pleased wonderfully with the clause at the end of the Pope's letter, '*pauperibus gratis dentur propter Deum.*'

"And when, three days later, they wanted to lay down the cross with great pomp and hew down the steps and ladders to Heaven, the spirit moved me that I went to the commissioners and asked them for letters forgiving my sins 'from mercy for the poor.' I said I was a sinner and poor and required pardon for my sins given as a matter of grace. The second day, about the time of vespers, I entered the house of Hans Pflock, where Tetzel was, to-

gether with the confessors and throngs of priests, and I addressed them in the Latin tongue and asked them to allow me, a pauper, according to the order of the Pope's letter, to beg absolution of all my sins free of charge and for God's sake, *etiam nullo casu reservato*, without reservation of a single case, and that they should give me *literas testimoniales* of the Pope, or testimony in writing. The priests were astonished at my Latin speech, for that was a rare thing in those days, especially among young boys, and they went from the room into the chamber adjoining, where the commissioner, Tetzel, was. They announced my request and also begged for me that he might give me the letters of pardon without charge. At last, after a long consultation, they return and bring me this answer: 'Dear son, we have submitted your prayer to the commissioner with diligence, and he admits he would gladly grant your prayer, but he cannot, and, though he would, the concession would be null and void. For he showed us that it was written clearly in the Pope's letter that those will surely share in the ample and gracious indulgences and treasures of the church and the deserts of Christ *qui porrigerent manum adjutricem*, who help with the hand, that is, who give money.' And they said all that in German words, for there was not one among them who could have spoken three words with me in Latin.

"On the other hand, I prayed again, and proved from the published letter of the Pope that the holy father, the Pope, commanded that such letters be given to the poor free of charge, for God's sake, and especially as there was added *ad mandatum domini papae proprium*, i. e., by the Lord, the Pope's, own command.

"So they go in again and beg the proud, haughty monk to grant my prayer and dismiss me with the pardon, as I was a prudent and eloquent youth and worthy that something special above others be done for me. But they come out again and once more bring the answer, '*de manu auxiliatrice*,' of the helping hand, which alone was powerful for a holy pardon. But I remain firm, and say that they do me, a pauper, wrong; whom neither God nor the Pope wanted to exclude from grace, him they rejected for the sake of a few pennies which I did not have. Then began a dispute. I was asked to give a small amount, that the helping hand might not be wanting, if it was but a groat. I said: 'I have not even that; I am poor.' Finally, it came down to this, that I should give but six pennies. I again replied that I had not a single penny. They urged me and spoke among themselves. At last I heard that they were anxious about two things: first, they should by no means let me depart without a letter of pardon, for it might be a trick devised by some one else and might lead to evil consequences, since it was written clearly in the Pope's letter that it should be given to the poor free of charge. Nevertheless, something should be taken from me that the others might not hear that the letters of pardon were given for nothing so that the whole lot of students and beggars would come and all would want their letters free. They need not have had any care about that, for the poor beggars sought more for bread to still their hunger.

"After having held their council, they come to me again, and one gives me six pennies, that I should give them to the commissioner. By this contribution I would

also be a builder of the church of St. Peter at Rome, also a slayer of the Turk, and would have a share in the grace of Christ and the indulgences. But I said freely, being moved by the spirit, if I wanted to buy indulgences and pardons for money, I might sell a book and buy them with my own money. But I wanted to have them given freely, for God's sake, or the commissioners should account before God for having neglected and trifled away the salvation of my soul on account of six pennies, since both God and the Pope wanted my soul to attain forgiveness of all my sins, freely, out of His grace. This I said, and knew not, in truth, how it stood with the letters of pardon.

"At last, after a long talk, the priests asked me who sent me to them and who trained me to discuss such things with them. So I told them the whole plain truth, how it was that I was admonished or induced by no man nor persuaded by any adviser, but that I had made my prayer alone, without any man's advice, and only trusting and confiding in the gracious pardon of sins freely given, and that in all my lifetime I never spoke or treated with such great men. For I was by nature timid, and if I had not been compelled by the great thirst for the grace of God I should not have dared such a great thing or mingled with such persons and asked such a thing of them. Then the letters were promised again, but so that I should buy them at six pennies, which were to be given me freely for my person. But I remained steadfast that the letters of pardon should be given to me free of charge by him who had the power to give them; if not, I would commend

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TETZEL. (Reproduced from Castelar's "La revolucion religiosa.")

and commit the matter to God. And thus I was dismissed by them.

"The holy thieves were, nevertheless, sad on account of this bargain. I was partly sad because I failed to get a letter of pardon, and partly I was glad that there was still One in Heaven who would forgive the sins of the penitent sinner without money or loan, according to the passage which I had often sung in church: 'As I live, saith the Lord, I want not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.' O dear Lord and God, Thou knowest that I do not lie in this matter or invent anything out of myself.

"With all this I was so moved that as I walked home to my lodgings I was fain to melt and dissolve into tears. So I arrive in my lodgings, go to my chamber and take the crucifix, which always lay on the little table in my study, and, setting it on a seat, I drop down on the floor in front of it. I cannot here describe it, but at that time I could feel the spirit of prayer and of grace which Thou, O my Lord and God, didst pour out over me. The sum of it all was this: I prayed that Thou, dear Lord, wouldst be my father, that Thou wouldst forgive my sin, I gave myself up to Thee completely that Thou shouldst make of me whatever might please Thee, and, since the priests would not be merciful to me without money, that Thou wouldst be my gracious God and Father.

"Then I felt that my whole heart was transformed; I felt vexed at all things in the world, and it seemed I was weary of this life. One thing only I wished, to live for God that I might please Him. But who was there then that might have taught me how to go about it?

For the Word, the Life, and the Light of men, was buried throughout the world in deepest darkness of human laws and the altogether foolish 'good works.' About Christ they were silent; nothing was known of Him, or if He was remembered He was pictured to us as a cruel, terrible judge, whom His mother and all the saints in Heaven could scarcely, with tears of blood, conciliate and make merciful, and even so, he would, for every mortal sin, thrust the men who did penance into the torments of purgatory for seven years. The torment of purgatory was in no wise different from the tortures of Hell except that it would not last forever. But the Holy Ghost gave me hope that God would be merciful to me.

"And then I began and counselled for some days within myself how I might begin a changed condition of my life. For I saw the sin of the world and the entire human race; I saw my manifold sin, which was very great. I had also heard something of the secret great sanctity and the pure, innocent life of the monks, serving God day and night, separated from all the evil life of the world, living soberly, piously, chastely, holding mass, singing psalms, fasting and praying forever. I had seen this apparent life, but did not know or understand that it was the greatest idolatry and hypocrisy.

"I communicated my counsel to my instructor, Master Andreas Staffelstein, the supreme regent of the school, who advised me at once to enter the Franciscan monastery, which was being rebuilt at that time. And, that I might not become changed in purpose by long delay, he at once went with me personally to the monks, praised my ability and character, and boasted that I was the only one

among his scholars who he was confident would be a right godly man.

"I wanted to impart my purpose to my parents and hear their opinions, being an only son and heir. But the monks taught me from Jerome I should leave father and mother and not regard them, and run to the Cross of Christ. They also adduced the saying of Christ: 'No one is fit for the Kingdom of God who lays the hand on the plow and looks behind him.' All these things urged and commanded that I turn monk. I will not here speak of many bonds and ties with which they bound and tied my conscience. For they said I could never be saved unless I speedily accepted and used the grace offered by God. Thereupon, being more willing to die than to forego the grace of God and eternal life, I at once took the vow and promised to return to the monastery in three days and begin the year of probation, as they call it in the monastery, i. e., I would become a pious, devout, and God-fearing monk.

"In the year of Christ 1510, July 14, at two o'clock in the afternoon, I entered the monastery, accompanied by my teacher and a few of my schoolmates and some very devout matrons, whom I had partly told the cause why I entered holy orders. And thus I blessed those who accompanied me to the monastery, all, amid tears, wishing me the grace of God and all blessings. And so I went into the monastery. Dear Lord, Thou knowest that this is all true. I sought not idleness, nor care of the belly, nor the semblance of great sanctity, but I wanted to please Thee; it was Thee I wanted to serve.

"Thus, at that time, I groped in great darkness."

LUTHER THE MONK.

LITTLE is known of Luther's early life beyond this, that he came near death, and, during a thunder-storm, "heard himself called by a terrible apparition from Heaven." In fear of death he vowed to enter a monastery, and carried out his resolution speedily and clandestinely.

We are justified in believing that Luther was in a frame of mind similar to Myconius when he entered the monastery, except that his sentiments were more profoundly stirred, his struggles fiercer. At odds with his father, full of terror at the thought of eternity which he could not understand, intimidated by the wrath of God, he entered, with almost convulsive energy, on a life of renunciation, devotion, and penance. He found no peace. All the highest questions of life assailed his unsupported, secluded soul with tremendous force. The need of feeling himself at one with God and the world was unusually strong and passionate in him; faith gave him only that which was unintelligible, bitter, repellent. To his nature the mysteries of the moral order of the world were of the greatest importance. That the good were persecuted while the bad were fortunate, that God damned the race of men with the awful curse of sin because an ignorant

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LUTHER ENTERING THE MONASTERY. (After Gustav König.)

woman bit into an apple, and that, on the other hand, the same God bore our sins with love, indulgence, and patience; that Christ on one occasion sent away honest people with harshness, and another time received harlots, publicans, and murderers—"the wisdom of human reason must become foolishness in the face of such things." At such times he would complain to his spiritual adviser, Staupitz: "Dear Doctor, the Lord proceeds so horribly with men; who can serve Him if He strikes about Himself so recklessly?" If the answer was made, "How else could he subdue the stubborn heads?" that intelligent argument could not console the youth.

Impelled by an ardent desire to find the incomprehensible God, he tortured himself by the closest analysis of all his thoughts and dreams. Every worldly thought, all the impulses of youthful blood, became to him abominable wrongs; he began to despair of himself; he wrestled in endless prayer, fasted and mortified the flesh. On one occasion, the brothers were obliged to force an entrance to his cell, in which he had lain for days in a condition not far remote from insanity. The warmest sympathy moved Staupitz as he looked upon these convulsive torments, and he would attempt to comfort him by rather rude speeches. Once, when Luther had written to him: "O my sin, sin, sin!" the spiritual adviser answered: "You want to be without sin and have no real sin. Christ is the pardon of real sins, as murdering one's parents, etc. If Christ is to help you, you should have a register enumerating the real sins, and not approach Him with such trifles and doll sins and make of every bubble a sin."

The manner in which Luther rose from his despair decided his entire future life. The God whom he served was at that time a God of terror; His wrath could be appeased only by the means of Grace indicated by the old church, consisting, in the foremost place, in continual confession, regulated by endless directions and forms that appeared vacant and frosty to the soul. Prescribed actions and the exercise of so-called good works did not bring to the youth a feeling of real conciliation and peace of mind. At last a word from his spiritual adviser struck him like an arrow: "Only that is true penance which begins by love of God. Love of God and elevation of soul is not the result of the means of Grace taught by the church, but must precede them."

This thought from Tauler's school became to the youth the foundation of a new moral relation of the soul to God.. It was a sacred find to him. The transformation of the soul itself was the principal thing. That was the aim to strive for. From the innermost corner of every human heart should come repentance, penance, conciliation. He himself, and each man, could raise himself to God. At last he surmised what free prayer was. The place of the remote divine power which he had previously been seeking in a hundred formulæ and childish confessions was now taken by an all-loving protector to whom he could address himself each hour joyfully and in tears, to whom he could carry every complaint, every doubt, who took an unceasing interest in him, cared for him, granted or refused his heart-felt prayers, Himself affectionate as a kind father. Thus he learned to pray, and how fiery his prayers became! Now he lived quietly to-

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LUTHER AS A MONK. (After the woodcut of Lucas Cranach.)

gether with the dear Lord whom he had found at last, in daily, hourly communion. Conversation with the Supreme Being became more intimate to him than that with the dearest beings of this earth. When he had poured out his whole soul before Him there would come over him tranquillity and sacred peace, a feeling of unutterable affection, he felt himself a part of God. And that relation remained to him from that time to the end of his days. He no longer needed the wide outside paths of the old church; with his God in his heart he could defy the whole world.

He began to believe that those taught a false doctrine who laid so much stress on works of penance that besides them nothing remained but a cold satisfaction and circumstantial confession. And, subsequently, when he learned from Melanchthon that the Greek word for "repentance" (*Metanoia*), meant, even linguistically, the transformation of the soul, it appeared to him a wonderful revelation. On this foundation rests the confident faith with which he set up the words of the Scriptures against the ordinances of the church.

In such manner did Luther in the monastery gradually work his way to spiritual emancipation. His entire subsequent teaching, the fight against the trade in pardons, his imperturbable steadfastness, his method of interpreting the Scriptures, rest upon the internal process by which, as a monk, he found his God. And it may well be said that with Luther's prayers in his cell began the new era of history. Soon, life was to lay him under the sledge-hammer to harden the pure metal of his soul.

THE RUPTURE WITH THE CHURCH.

IT WAS with reluctance that Luther in 1508 accepted the professorship of dialectics at the new University of Wittenberg. He would have preferred to teach that theology which even then he held to be the true one. It is well known how in 1510 he went to Rome on business of the order, how he remained in the holy city full of devotion and piety, what an abomination were to him the heathen practices of the Latins, the corruption of morals and worldliness of the clergy. There it was that while reading mass his devotion was disturbed by ribald jests which the Roman members of his order interjected. He never forgot the fiendish words as long as he lived.

But however deeply the corruption of the hierarchy stirred his emotions, it nevertheless comprised all his hopes; there was no God and no hereafter outside of it. The lofty idea of the Catholic Church and its victories of fifteen hundred years fettered the minds of even the strongest. And when, clad in the garments of the Roman priesthood, he visited, at the risk of his life, the ruins of ancient Rome and stood amazed before the gigantic columns of the temples destroyed, according to tradition, by the Goths, the warlike man from the mount-

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NAILING THE THESES TO THE CHURCH DOOR. (Reproduced from Castelar's "La revolucion religiosa.")

ains of the ancient Hermunduri little dreamed that it would be his destiny to shatter the temples of mediæval Rome more thoroughly, fiercely, grandly than had been done in bygone ages by the cousins of his forefathers.

Luther still returned from Rome a faithful son of the great mother, all heretical practices, for instance those of the Bohemians, being offensive to him. After his return he took a warm part in the controversy of Reuchlin against the judges of heresy at Cologne, and about 1512 he was a partisan of the Humanists. But even then he felt that something stood between him and that school. Some years later when at Gotha, he failed to visit the venerable Mutianus Rufus, although he sent a very courteous letter of excuse. And soon after he was offended in the dialogues of Erasmus by the inner chillness and the worldly tone in which the theological sinners were scoffed at. In the profane worldliness of the Humanists the soul of Luther, so happy in its faith, never felt truly at home, and that pride which subsequently offended the sensitive Erasmus in a letter meant to be conciliatory, probably dwelt in his soul even at that early time. The forms of Luther's literary modesty during that time make the impression that it was compelled from a firm spirit by the power of Christian humility.

For, in his faith he then felt sure and great. As early as 1516 he wrote to Spalatin who represented his connexion with the Prince-Elector Frederick the Wise, that the Elector was the wisest man in all the affairs of this world, but where God and salvation were concerned he was struck with seven-fold blindness.

Luther had cause for this utterance, for the provi-

dence of that well-poised prince was manifested, among other things, by the prudent endeavors to gather the means of grace recommended by the church. Thus, he had a peculiar fancy for relics, and at that time Staupitz, vicar of the Augustine-Eremites of Saxony, was engaged along the Rhine and elsewhere collecting treasures of relics for the Elector. This absence of the superior officer was important for Luther who had to take his place. He was already a man of authority in his order. Although a professor of theology since 1512, he still lived in his monastery at Wittenberg, and, as a rule, wore his monk's hood. He visited the thirty monasteries of his congregation, deposed priors, issued severe reprimands on lax discipline, and urged severity towards fallen monks. Yet he still retained something of the pious simplicity of the brother of the monastery.

For it was in that sense that on October 31, 1517, after he had affixed the theses against Tetzel at the church door, he wrote, full of confidence and simple honesty, to the protector of the dealer in indulgences, Archbishop Albrecht of Mayence. Full of the ingenuous popular faith in the intelligence and good intentions of the highest rulers, Luther thought—as he often said in later times—that it needed but to represent honestly to the princes of the church the disadvantage and immorality of such abuses. But how childish did this zeal of the monk appear to the smooth and refined princes of the church! What aroused the profound indignation of the honest man was all finished, disposed of, laid aside, from the point of view of the Archbishop. The sale of indulgences was an evil which had been deplored a hundred times, but it was

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LUTHER LECTURING AT THE UNIVERSITY. (After Gustav König.)

unavoidable, as many institutions are to the politician which, while not good in themselves, must be sustained for the sake of a great interest. The greatest interest to the Archbishop and the curia was their temporal dominion, which was gained and supported by money made in that manner. The great interest of Luther and the people was truth. This was the parting of the ways.

Luther entered the struggle full of faith, a loyal son of the church, full of devotion to the authorities of the church. But, again, he had within him that which confirmed him against too powerful an influence from such authority, a secure relation with his God. He was thirty-four years old at that time, in the prime of his powers, of medium size, of slender but strong body, which seemed tall by the side of the small, delicate, boyish figure of Melanchthon. In a countenance showing the traces of night vigils and internal struggles, there glowed the fiery eyes whose powerful radiance was difficult to bear. A respected man, not only in his order but also at the university; not a great scholar, for he learned Greek from Melanchthon the following year and Hebrew immediately after; he possessed no extensive book learning and never was ambitious to shine as a Latin poet. But he was astonishingly well read in the Scriptures and some fathers of the church, and what he absorbed he digested with German thoroughness. He was indefatigable as a minister of his congregation, a zealous preacher, a warm friend, having recovered an honest cheerfulness at that time, of assured bearing, courteous and adroit, his intercourse marked by conscious assurance which often transfigured his features with a happy humor. Small events of the

day readily moved or disturbed him; he was irritable and wept easily, but if a great call approached him and he had overcome the first nervous excitement—which, for instance, embarrassed him in his first appearance at the diet of Worms—he possessed a wonderful equanimity and assurance. He knew not fear; his leonine nature even took enjoyment in the most dangerous situations. Accidental danger of life which he incurred, insidious attacks of his enemies, were scarcely held worthy of mention at that time.

The foundation of this superhuman heroism, as it were, was again his firm personal relationship to his God. He had long periods when he desired martyrdom, smiling and inwardly happy, to serve the truth and his God.

Still the future held terrible struggles in store for him, but they were not of the kind in which he was met by men. It was the Devil himself he had to beat down for years, again and again; he overcame the anguish and torments of Hell which was busily at work to obscure his understanding. Such a man might be killed, but could hardly be conquered.

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PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

THE CONFLICT.

THAT period of the struggle which follows next, from the beginning of the controversy over the sale of indulgences to the departure from the Wartburg, the period of his greatest victories and of an immense popularity, is perhaps best known, and yet it seems that his character, as it was during that period is not yet judged aright

Nothing is more remarkable during that time than the manner in which Luther gradually became estranged from the Roman Church. He was modest in life and without ambition; he clung with most profound reverence to the lofty idea of the church, the community of the faithful for fifteen hundred years. And yet in four short years he was to be separated from the faith of his fathers, torn away from the soil in which he was so firmly rooted. And during all that time he would stand alone in the struggle, alone, or at least with but a few loyal companions—since 1518 with Melanchthon. He was to encounter all the dangers of the fiercest war, not only against countless enemies, but also against the anxious warnings of honest friends and protectors. Thrice the Roman party tried to silence him by the mission of Cajetanus, the persuasive arts of Miltitz, the untimely assiduity of the quar-

relsome Eck; thrice he spoke himself to the Pope in letters which are among the most valuable documents of those years. Then came the divorce; he was cursed and outlawed; according to old university usage he burned the challenge, and with it the possibility of retreat.

With cheerful confidence he went to Worms that the princes of his nation might decide whether he should die or live among them thenceforth without Pope or church, according to the Scriptures only.

At first, when he had issued in print the theses against Tetzel, he was astonished at the tremendous attention they aroused in the empire, the venomous hatred of his enemies, and the expressions of joyful recognition which he received on many hands. Was his action such an unheard-of thing? What he had uttered was believed by all the best men of the church. When the Bishop of Brandenburg sent the Abbot of Lehnin to him with the request that Luther should suppress the publication of his German sermon on "Absolution and Grace," no matter how just his position was, the friar of the poor Augustinian monastery was deeply moved that such great men spoke kindly and cordially to him, and he was inclined rather to give up the publication than to appear like a strange freak of nature to disturb the peace of the church. He endeavored zealously to controvert the rumor that the Prince-Elector occasioned his quarrel with Tetzel. "They want to involve the innocent prince in the hatred that pursues me." He was willing to do anything to preserve the peace, before Cajetanus and with Miltitz; only one thing he would not do, he could not recant what he had said against the un-Christian extension of the sale of indul-

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CALIFORNIA

POPE LEO X.

gences. Yet it was recantation alone that the hierarchy demanded of him. For a long time he continued to desire peace, penance, retreat to the peaceful activity of his cell, and yet again and again an untruthful assertion of the adversaries set his blood on fire, and each contradiction was followed by a new, a sharper blow of his weapon.

Even in the first letter to Leo X., of May 30, 1518, the heroic assurance of Luther is striking. As yet he is the faithful son of the church, as yet he lays himself at the feet of the Pope, offers him his whole life and being, and promises to honor his voice as the voice of Christ, whose vicegerent the head of the church is. But even from this humility, which became the member of the monastic order, there flashes forth the violent words: "If I have merited death I do not refuse to die." And in the letter itself, how vigorous are the terms in which he describes the coarseness of the sellers of pardons! There was honest surprise why his theses made so much stir, those sentences so hard to understand and involved in enigmatical forms according to ancient usage. And good humor sounds through the manly words: "What shall I do? I cannot recant. In our century full of genius and beauty that might crowd a Cicero into a corner, I, an unlearned, narrow man, without refinement of culture! But necessity compels, the goose must chatter among the swans."

The following year nearly all the friends of Luther united to bring about a reconciliation. Staupitz and Spalatin, back of them the Prince-Elector, scolded, begged, and urged. The papal chamberlain Miltitz himself praised Luther's disposition, whispered to him that he

was perfectly right, implored, drank with him, and kissed him. True, Luther thought he knew that the courtier had the secret mission to carry him prisoner to Rome if possible. But the mediators happily found the point where the stubborn man agreed with them heartily, viz., that respect for the church must be maintained and its unity left undisturbed. Luther promised to keep still and to leave the decision of the controverted points to three respectable bishops. In this position he was urged to write a letter of excuse to the Pope. But even this letter of March 3, 1519, undoubtedly passed upon by the mediators and wrung from the writer, is characteristic of the progress Luther had made. Of humility which our theologians read in it, it contains very little, but shows a careful diplomatic attitude throughout. Luther regrets that he had been charged with lack of reverence whereas that which he had done was intended to protect the honor of the Roman Church; he promises to keep silent about pardons and indulgences in the future, provided his adversaries would do likewise; he promises to publish an address to the people admonishing them to obey the Roman Church sincerely and not to become estranged from it because its opponents had been insolent and himself rude.

But all these submissive words fail to cover the chasm which already separates his mind from the Roman spirit. And it sounds like cold irony when he writes: "What shall I do, most Holy Father? I lack all advice. I cannot bear the weight of your wrath and yet I know not how I can escape it. They demand of me a recantation. If it could effect what is intended by it I should

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

ERASMUS.

recant without a doubt. But the opposition of my adversaries has spread my writings further than I ever had hoped; they sit too deeply in the souls of men. In our Germany there now flourish talent, culture, free judgment. Should I recant, I should cover the church with still greater obloquy in the judgment of my countrymen. And it is they, my adversaries, that have brought disgrace upon the Roman Church among us." Finally he concludes politely: "Should I be able to do more I shall without doubt be quite ready for it. Christ save your Holiness. M. Luther."

Much may be read behind this temperate restraint. Even if the vain Eck had not at once forced the entire University of Wittenberg into the fight, this letter could scarcely be taken in Rome as a sign of repentance and submission.

Rome had spoken and Luther stood condemned. Yet once more Luther showed the spirit of reconciliation that characterises the deepest sentiments of his heart. A second time appealing directly to the Pope, he wrote that celebrated great letter, which at the request of the indefatigable Miltitz he dated back to September 6, 1520, in order to be able to ignore the bull of excommunication. It is the beautiful reflexion of a resolute spirit who, at once grand in sincerity and noble in disposition, from his lofty standpoint entirely overlooks his adversary. With genuine sympathy he speaks of the person and the difficult position of the Pope, but it is the sympathy of a stranger; still, he ruefully deplores the church, but one feels that he has outgrown it himself. It is a letter of divorce, cutting keenness coupled with a positive attitude

and silent sorrow; thus does a man part from that which he once loved and has found unworthy. To the mediators this letter was to be the last bridge, for Luther it was spiritual emancipation.

Luther himself had become a different man in these years. In the first place, he had acquired firm self-reliance in his intercourse with the mighty ones of this earth and at a high price acquired an insight into the politics and private character of those who governed. To the peaceful character of his sovereign there was nothing, at bottom, more painful than this bitter theological controversy which at times promoted his policies, but always disturbed him mentally. Forever the court sought to restrain the men of Wittenberg, and ever Luther took care that it was too late. Whenever the faithful Spalatin warned against a new polemic step the answer came back to him that there was no help, the sheets were printed and already in many hands and beyond recall.

In his intercourse with his adversaries, also, Luther acquired the assurance of a tried champion. He still felt bitterly that in the spring of 1518 Jerome Emser at Dresden insidiously led him to a supper at which he was obliged to fight with angry enemies, particularly when he learned that a begging Dominican friar had listened at the door and spread the tale in the city the next day, that Luther was completely smothered and that the listener could scarcely restrain himself from leaping into the room and spitting in the heretic's face.

At the first meeting with Cajetanus he still sank humbly down at the feet of the prince of the church; after the second meeting he permitted himself to think

that the Cardinal was as fit for his business "as an ass for harp playing." The courteous Miltitz was treated with corresponding politeness. The Romanist had hoped to tame the German bear; soon the courtier got into that position which fitted him: he became the tool of Luther. And in the disputation of Leipsic with Eck, the favorable impression which the sincere and firm manner of Luther created was the best counterbalance against the complacent assurance of his adroit adversary.

BATTLES WITHIN AND BATTLES WITHOUT.

THE time when Luther was driven into a struggle with the greatest power on earth was for him a period of terrible suffering. Close to the elation of victory lay mortal anxiety, torturing doubt, and fearful temptation. He alone with a few, in arms against all Christendom, in ever more implacable hostility to the mightiest power which still embraced all that was sacred to him from his youth. If, after all, he erred in this thing or that? He was responsible for every soul that he carried along with him. And whither? What was there outside of the church? Annihilation, destruction in this life and hereafter. If adversaries and timid friends cut his heart with reproaches and warnings, incomparably greater was the torment, the secret gnawing, the uncertainty which he durst not confess to anybody.

In prayer alone he found peace. Whenever his soul, fervently seeking God, soared in mighty upward flight, there came to him fulness of strength, composure, and serenity. But in the hours of depression, when his impressionable soul quivered under contrary impressions, then he felt embarrassed, divided, under the bane of another power which was inimical to his God.

From his childhood he knew how busily the evil spirits hover about man; from Scripture he had learned that the Devil works upon the purest, to destroy them. On his path, also, lurked busy devils to weaken, to entice him, to make countless others miserable through him. He saw them work in the angry features of the Cardinal, in the sneering face of Eck, yea, in the thoughts of his own soul. He knew how powerful they were in Rome.

In his youth he had been tormented by apparitions, now they returned. Out of the dark shadow of his study the spectre of the tempter raised its claws against his reason, even in the form of the Saviour did the Devil approach the praying man, radiant as the Prince of Heaven with five wounds, as the old church pictured Him. But Luther knew that Christ appears to poor mortals only in His words or in such humble form as He hung on the Cross. And he gathered himself up indignantly and cried out to the apparition: "Get thee gone, thou blaspheming devil," and the apparition vanished.

Thus the strong heart of the man labored in wild insurrection for long years with ever fresh force. It was a ceaseless struggle between reason and illusion. But ever he rose victor, the primary strength of his healthy nature overcame. In long prayer, often lasting for hours, the stormy billows of emotion were smoothed., his massive understanding and his conscience ever led him from doubt to certainty. He felt this emancipating process as a merciful inspiration of his God. And after such moments his anxious fear gave way to a perfect indifference to the judgment of men; he became immovable and inexorable.

Altogether different appears his personality in the struggle with the enemies of this earth. With scarcely an exception he there displays secure superiority, most especially in his literary disputes.

Gigantic was the literary activity which he developed. Up to 1517 he had published little, from that time forward he became at once not only the most fertile but also the most popular writer of Germany. The swing of his style, the power of demonstration, the fire and passion of his convictions carried everything before them. No one had ever spoken thus to the people. His language adapted itself to every mood, to every key, now terse and condensed and sharp as steel. Again in ample breadth, a mighty river, his words penetrated the people. His imagery and striking comparisons made the most difficult things intelligible. His was a wonderful creative power.

He handled language with sovereign facility. No sooner did he seize the pen, than his mind worked with the greatest freedom. His sentences exhale the serene warmth which filled him. The full charm of heartfelt joy in the work is poured over them. And his power is not the least manifest in the attacks which he directed at individual opponents. But it is also closely allied with the impropriety which caused apprehensions even in his admiring contemporaries. He loved to play with his adversaries, his fancy clothes the figure of the enemy with a grotesque mask, and this picture of his fancy he taunts, scoffs, and thrusts at with turns of speech that do not sound temperate and not always proper. But it is in this very invective that his good humor, as a rule, conciliates the reader, though not those whom he hits. Petty spitefulness he scarcely

ever shows, not infrequently, however, an indelible good humor.

At times, it is true, he gets into the real artist's passion; he forgets the dignity of the reformer and pinches like a naughty child, nay, like a spiteful goblin. How he plucked all his opponents to pieces! Now, as by the blows of a club swung by a wrathful giant, again with a fool's bauble.

He loved to ridicule the names of his adversaries. Thus they lived in the circle of Wittenberg as beasts or as fools. Eck became Dr. Geck,* Murner† received a cat's head and claws; Emser, who had his coat of arms, a goat's head, painted on most of his polemic writings, was maltreated as a he-goat; the Latin name of the recreant Humanist Cochlaeus‡ was re-translated and Luther greeted him as a snail with an impenetrable coat of mail and—it is painful to relate—even called him snotnose. Worse, and terrifying even to his contemporaries, was the violent recklessness with which he inveighed against hostile princes. Towards the cousin of his sovereign, Duke George of Saxony, he often exhibited an unavoidable forbearance. Each considered the other a prey to the Devil, but secretly each respected the manly worth of the other. Again and again they got into disputes, literary ones, also; but again and again Luther prayed heartily for the soul of his neighbor. On the other hand, the arbitrary wickedness of Henry VIII. of England was

* Geck = coxcomb.

† "Murr," a familiar designation of a cat. We must add here that this was the custom of the age, for Murner himself never fails to represent his own picture in his satires with a cat's head and cat's claws.

‡ Latin *cochlea*, meaning a snail.

loathsome to the inmost heart of the German reformer, he inveighed against him most shockingly and interminably. And even during the last years he treated the violent Henry of Brunswick like a naughty schoolboy. Harlequin was the most harmless among the many characters in which he produced him.

If such an effusion of his stared him in the face in print when it was too late, and if friends made complaint, he would be vexed at his rudeness, scold himself, and be sincerely penitent; but repentence helped little, for at the next opportunity he fell into the same error. And Spalatin had some cause to look with suspicion upon a projected publication, even when Luther intended to write very mildly and tamely. His opponents could not equal him in vigor. They called him names with equal good-will, but they lacked mental freedom. Unfortunately, it can hardly be denied that this seasoning of the moral dignity of his nature often made his writings particularly irresistible to the common people of the sixteenth century.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BURNING THE PAPAL BULL. (After Lessing.)

ACCEPTING THE SUMMONS.

IN THE autumn of 1517 Luther got into a quarrel with a dissolute Dominican friar; in the winter of 1520 he burned the papal bull. In the spring of 1518 he had prostrated himself at the feet of the Pope, the vicegerent of Christ; in the spring of 1521 he declared at the Diet of Worms, before the Emperor and the princes and papal legates, that he did not believe either the Pope or the Councils alone, but only the testimony of the Holy Scriptures and rational thought.

Luther knew since December, 1520, that his case was to be heard at the Diet, called to meet at Worms, and he also knew that the cardinal-delegate, Aleander, was ceaselessly urging the Emperor to be severe with him, that the Emperor himself was not favorably disposed towards the bold monk, whose heretical books he had burned in the Netherlands. The Prince-Elector of Saxony reached Worms early in January, and found the Emperor present. The great men of the empire gathered slowly and tardily. It was not until the end of February, 1521, that the diet could be opened.

The intelligence which came from Worms to Wittenberg, travelling about as long as a letter from Europe to

America does to-day, took on a less favorable tone. The Emperor and Luther's enemies thought it improper that the excommunicated friar should be admitted to the Diet at all, and Prince-Elector Frederick and the other princes of the empire who thought it was wrong, or, at least, imprudent, on account of the popular excitement, to condemn him without a hearing, were obliged to put forth the greatest efforts to obtain the concession that the heretic was asked if he would recant and that he secured a safe-conduct.

Thus it was not unknown to Luther that imperial outlawry threatened him, and his death was probable. Naturally such a prospect should have impaired somewhat the cheerfulness and literary productiveness of even the most virile man. But in his case the reverse was true. Scarcely at any other time in his life did he write so much and such a variety of matter as during those months. He took his old literary opponent, Ambrosius Catharinus, by the collar, and, with even greater energy, the tedious Emser, of Leipsic, whom he scored, ridiculed, and cuffed in a series of little books. The Pope, the legates, and their courtesans were represented with harsh humor in wood-cuts by his friend, Lucas Cranach, contrasting the humility of the suffering Christ with the splendor of the clergy. He also labored indefatigably for education and the ministry of souls. Besides some sermons and the *Instructions for Penitents* this period brought the first part of the *Postils*, one of his principal works, he worked on his exegesis of the Book of Psalms and on the fine and soulful book, *Explanation of Mary's Song of Praise.*

At last the imperial herald, Caspar Sturm, who was called "Germania" in the heraldic language of the Latins, brought the letter of safe-conduct to Wittenberg and rode ahead of the waggon of Luther, who started for Worms on April 2 with Amsdorf and two other companions. In the cities of Thuringia the people crowded about his waggon offering their good wishes. At Erfurt, the Humanists, who were the ruling party at that university, met him in a great procession on horseback and gave a brilliant feast.

But through all these enthusiastic acclamations there sounded a shrill note of discord. The Emperor had promised safe-conduct for the journey both ways, and the princes through whose domains he travelled, had also sent letters to protect him. Nevertheless, the Emperor did not want the excommunicated friar to reach Worms, and, in order to deter him, he issued an order in advance of the hearing and had it proclaimed in the cities that all of Luther's books should be given up to the authorities. Luther found the proclamation posted in the cities. His friends at Worms were alarmed. Spalatin sent him a warning that the fate of Huss was in store for him; even the herald asked if he still insisted on continuing his journey. Luther himself was startled, but could not be turned aside. He sent answer to Spalatin that Huss was burned. but the truth was not burned, and he would go to Worms though there were as many devils as tiles on the roofs.

Milder means, also, were tried to divert him. The Emperor's confessor, Glapio, went to Sickingen at Ebernburg, apparently of his own free will, and advised most urgently that Luther should avoid Worms and go to

Ebernburg to seek an understanding with him first. If Luther had accepted this proposition it would have been impossible to keep within the time for which he was protected by the safe-conduct. Luther replied to the well-meaning bearer of the message that if the Emperor's confessor desired to speak with him he could be found at Worms.

When he drove into Worms, on the last day of the term allowed for the journey, he was escorted by a cavalcade of a hundred horsemen, most of them Saxon gentlemen, who had come to meet him, while the people crowded the streets and watched him with curiosity; and his quarters, which were assigned him in the house of the order of St. John, were visited until late into the night by noble callers who were full of curiosity and sympathy. The next day he was cited before the Diet.

It was a disagreeable surprise to the papist party that Luther had the courage to come. It was inconvenient to the Emperor also. It was necessary, then, to calm the excitement which his presence created among the Germans, by a speedy decision. On the other hand, his friends and a majority of the princes who desired a compromise and a friendly settlement of the dangerous dispute, did not want to have the matter treated hastily. Chief among these was the Prince-Elector, Frederick the Wise, whose prudent manner could not suffer any violent and superficial proceeding, particularly as such a course would put himself in a most unpleasant situation with the empire. He required time to satisfy his conscience and come to a decision. His confidential advisers knew that it would be simply a question of recantation and that there was

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

LUTHER'S ENTRANCE INTO WORMS. (After Spangenberg.)

no possibility of any discussion or debate before the Diet. Luther, however, had declared positively that he would recant nothing. He was required, first of all, to satisfy his sovereign and all who were inclined to mediate by asking for time to reflect upon so grave and difficult a matter. It was a mere question of postponing the final decision, but Luther was obliged, whether he would or not, to conform to this requirement.

THE DIET OF WORMS.

IT WAS on April 17, at four o'clock in the afternoon, that Luther was escorted to the Diet by the imperial marshal, Ulrich von Pappenheim, and the herald. The people crowded the streets and climbed on the roofs to see Luther, so that he was taken by side streets to the Episcopal Court, where the Diet was in session. This court, according to popular tradition, was in ancient times the royal palace of Gunther, King of the Burgundians, and it was there that the King, with the gloomy Hagen, devised the secret plot against the life of the sunny hero Siegfried. Since that time the celebrated building has been destroyed by the French. The princes and other participants in the Diet sat in the main hall, which opened along one side on an ante-room, so that they could be seen from without and probably parts of their speeches could be heard. But the princes themselves were not wont to speak during the sessions. This was done by their councillors, and the princes retired for private conference when the time came for taking a decision.

Tradition tells us that on the threshold of the hall George von Frundsberg, the famous general of the imperial army, laid his hand on Luther's shoulder and said

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

READY TO FACE THE DIET. (After Gustav König.)

kindly: "My dear monk, thou goest to an encounter which I and many foremost leaders of battle never have faced. If thou art right and sure of thy cause, God speed thee, and be comforted. God will not forsake thee."

When Luther was led in, Pappenheim cautioned him that he could say nothing before the august assembly except in answer to questions. When he entered he did not kneel down, as was expected of a monk when appearing before the majesty of the Emperor, but stood bolt upright. In front of him he saw the pale face and sombre glance of the young Emperor; he saw the expression of anxiety in the kind face of his sovereign, the Elector, and found himself in the presence of all those illustrious princes and gentlemen of whose dispositions and opinions he had heard so much in late years.

The official of the Archbishop of Treves began as speaker for the Emperor: "His Imperial Majesty has sent his mandate and summons to you, Martinus Luther, to appear before the present Diet, that you may first give answer if you confess to the books which have appeared everywhere in the Holy Roman Empire under your title and name, and if you wrote them as they here lie before your eyes." He pointed to a pile of books lying on a bench. Jerome Schurf, who, with five other doctors, was Luther's legal adviser, called out: "Let the titles be read," and Luther repeated the request.

The official read the titles of those books which for years had excited the nation as was never done by the publications of any man, either before or since. Then he continued: "Furthermore, if you confess to the books, His Imperial Majesty demands that you shall re-

cant them here and now, and therefore asks whether you will do so or not, since there is mixed in them much evil and erroneous teachings which may cause excitement and discontent in the common, simple people. Consider and take this to heart."

Luther's reply was about as follows: "Most illustrious Emperor: Having appeared here in obedience to your gracious bidding, I will answer, in the first place, to the matter presented: The books whose titles have just been read, and some others, which were written for the instruction of the people, I confess to, and shall adhere to such confession to the end of my days. In the second place, however, since your Imperial Majesty requires that I recant their contents, I would answer that this is truly a great matter, for it concerns everlasting life and relates to One who is more than any one in this assembly; it is His affair and action. That I may not, therefore, mislead the poor Christian people and myself, I beg and ask that your Imperial Majesty grant me a term for reflexion and consideration."

The Emperor and the princes joined in a short consultation. A majority insisted that the delay be granted, and the official announced to Luther that the Emperor's mercy would grant him time to reflect until four o'clock the next day. Luther left with the words: "I shall consider the matter."

In this session he spoke low and with humility, and, his enemies said, indistinctly. It may be that the first impression of the assembly embarrassed him. Assuredly it was a greater burden to him that he could not speak out freely all that he wanted.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BEFORE THE DIET OF WORMS. (After Werner.)

The delay was short. The desire of the enemies to be rid of the disturber was too great. The question was what effect a refusal of Luther would produce. For he declared again after returning to his lodgings that he would not recant a single stroke.

On April 18 he was again called for at four o'clock, and had to wait in the crowd for about two hours. But when he entered the meeting this time, he was quite himself again and utterly indifferent to the opinion of men. He greeted the assembly according to the manners of the court, by bending both knees a trifle. He spoke respectfully but firmly, and his voice, which was clear and high, as once upon a time was that of Charlemagne, was heard all over the hall. In a well-considered speech he greeted the Emperor and the assembly, and first begged pardon if in word, gesture, or manner he violated the manners of court-life, since he was not brought up at any princely court, but in the corners of monasteries. "In simplicity of mind I have written and taught up to this time, and sought nothing else on earth than the glory of God and the instruction of those who believe in Christ."

Then he continued: "To the two questions which have been put to me I will answer in this wise: I confess, as I did yesterday, that the books enumerated were written by me and were issued in my name, unless by fraud or the ignorance of others something was altered or wrongly extracted in the printing, for I confess only to that which came from myself. Now, my books are not of one kind, for in some I treated quite simply and according to the Gospels, of faith and morals. These books must be held useful even by my adversaries and worthy

of being read by Christians. Even the angry and cruel bull of the Pope calls some of my books harmless, although it condemns them contrary to reason. If I were to begin to recant these writings, on which both friends and enemies are agreed, I should be in conflict with the general and harmonious opinion.

"The second series of my books is directed against popery and the actions of the papists, against those who, with evil teachings and example, have destroyed and corrupted the Christian world, miserably oppressed, burdened, and tortured the consciences of the faithful, also devoured the goods and possessions of the great German nation by incredible tyranny and rank injustice. Should I recant these books I should do nothing else than to strengthen such tyranny and unchristian practices and throw open to them not the windows alone, but the doors also, that they could continue to rage and work evil, and their most impudent and criminal rancor would be confirmed and fastened upon the poor, miserable people to a degree that would be intolerable. This would be particularly the case if it could be said that such increase of misfortune happened at the order and upon the desire of your Imperial Majesty and the entire Roman Empire. O my dear Lord, what an infamous cloak of villainy and tyranny I should become by such a recantation!

"The third kind of my books are written against certain individuals who tried to protect Roman tyranny and to eradicate the form of serving God which I taught. I confess that against these adversaries I was more violent than was proper for I do not make myself out a saint, nor did I fight for myself, but for the honor of Christ,

These books, likewise, I cannot recant, for my recantation and retreat would strengthen the tyrannical wrath and mad government of the enemies.

"My Lord Jesus Christ, when questioned by the high priest about his teachings, and, being struck on the cheek by a servant, said: 'If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil.' Since the Lord did not refuse to listen to an argument against his teachings, even from the lowliest slave, how much more is it becoming in me, an erring man, to desire and expect that some one may give me witness against my teachings. Hence, I implore the highest and the lowest, by the mercy of God, to prove my error and overcome me with the evangelical and prophetic writings. If I am instructed in that regard I will be the very first to throw my books into the fire.

"Yesterday I was admonished earnestly to reflect that discord, riot, and rebellion may grow out of my teachings in the world. I have considered and weighed it sufficiently. In truth, it is most joyful to me to see that on account of the divine word there will be dissension in the world, for that is the consequence and the fate which is prepared by the Word of God. The Lord Himself said: 'I came not to send peace but a sword, for I am come to set a man at variance against his father.' Let us beware, therefore, lest we condemn the Word of God, under the pretext of adjusting the quarrels of parties, that a flood of insufferable evil may not come over us and lest the noble youth, Emperor Charles, have an unhappy beginning of his reign. I say this not as though my teaching and warning was needed by such great heads, but because I owe it to my native land to do her this ser-

vice. And thus I commend myself to the mercy of the Emperor and beg that your Imperial Majesty may not suffer me to fall into disfavor through the ill opinion of my enemies."

Thus spoke on April 18, 1521, a man from the common people before the Emperor and all the princes about the government of the highest spiritual lord of the Christian world. The polite modesty of the opening, the care with which he distinguished his books, appeared as good address even to his enemies. But soon after, he stood in the assembly a stranger from another world, like a hero of old swinging his iron club among a lot of delicate knights. His comfortable assurance in describing the heads of the clergy as frivolous villains, and the final warlike assertion: "It is most joyful to me to see how rebellion rises," before the august assembly which feared nothing more than dissension among the people, was not the language of a penitent speaking for his neck, but the proud utterance of a ruler chosen for victory or ruin.

It was a weird effect that the daring words and the demon-like eyes of the man made upon the official, and he attempted to instruct and reprimand him: "In your answer there were thrusts and biting attacks, but no open declaration. What you teach has been said by Huss and other heretics, and that teaching has already been condemned at the Council of Constance, with sufficient reason, by Pope and Emperor. I demand a simple, plain answer: Will you recant or not? If you recant, your innocent little books will be preserved; if you do not recant, no regard will be had for what else you may have written in a Christian sense, and you will give his Impe-

UNIV. OF

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

FREDERICK THE WISE, PRINCE-ELECTOR OF SAXONY. (After Albrecht Dürer.)

rial Majesty cause to do with you as was done with Huss and others."

It was then that Luther spoke the familiar words: "Since his Imperial Majesty requires a simple and straight answer, I will give an answer that is neither offensive nor biting. I do not believe in either the Pope or the councils alone, since it is plain that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves. Unless I am overcome with the testimony of the Scripture or with clear and transparent reasons, I will and shall not recant a single word, for it is wicked and dangerous to act contrary to conscience."

The official and Luther spoke Latin first, then repeated their words in German. After the words of Luther there was excitement and murmuring in the hall, and the following Latin speeches of the two champions were not heard all through the meeting. The angry Emperor again asked, through the official, if Luther dared assert that the councils had erred. And when Luther answered: "Councils can err and have erred, and the one of Constance decided contrary to the clear and lucid text of the Scripture, which I will demonstrate," the Emperor had heard enough. Amazed at such audacity, he gave the signal to close the proceedings and break up the meeting. In response to the hostile gesture of the Emperor and amid the clamor of his enemies, Luther finally exclaimed in German the words which, according to the form handed down by his theological friends in the editions of his works, were: "Here I am. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen!" In reality they were probably ut-

tered in this way: "I cannot do otherwise. May God come to my aid. Amen. Here I am."

It was the two days of the 17th and 18th of April, 1521, that the two men looked in one another's faces who have split the life of the western world in two, the great enemies who in the great-grandchildren of their spirit have fought each other down into the present time, the Burgundian Hapsburger and the German peasant's son, emperor and professor, the one who spoke German only to his horse, the other the translator of the Bible and creator of the new German language, the one the predecessor of the patrons of the Jesuits, author of the house-policy of the Hapsburgs, the other the precursor of Lessing, the great poets, historians, and philosophers. It was an hour big with fate for the history of the world when the young Emperor, lord over one-half of the world, spoke the contemptuous words: "That fellow shall not make a heretic of me." For it was at that time that there began the struggle of his house with the spirit of the people, a struggle of over three centuries, victories and defeats on both sides. As far as human judgment may read the workings of Providence in the fate of nations, we of to-day have at last seen the final outcome.

It was the first and only time, too, in German history, that a man from the people so firmly defended, in peril of death, the demands of his conscience before the Emperor and the Diet. The effect of his steadfastness upon the princes was great, immeasurably great upon the people. When Frederick the Wise came to his chamber from the assembly he said to his intimates, full both of admiration and of care: "Doctor Martinus spoke well,

in Latin and in German. He is much too courageous for me." Even among those princes who looked upon his teachings with indifference or dislike, respect and awe of the brave man increased.

Luther, upon returning from the grand assemblage to his lodgings, raised his hands to Heaven and joyfully exclaimed: "I am through, I am through!" He had escaped out into the open from the hedge of thorns with which it was sought to surround him.

At last Luther was free. But what a freedom it was! He was banned by the Pope and outlawed by the Emperor. Nevertheless, he was free—free within himself, but free as the beast of the forest, a fugitive; and at his heels howled a bloodthirsty pack of enemies. He had arrived at the climax of his life, and the powers against which he had rebelled, yea, the thoughts which he himself had stirred up in the people, thenceforth worked against his life and teachings.

THE HERO OF THE NATION.

THE clouds lower; the storm breaks; the whole nation is agitated by electric flashes. The words of the Augustinian monk of Wittenberg crash and roll like peals of thunder, and every blow means progress, means victory. Even to-day, after a lapse of three centuries and a half, the tremendous commotion of the nation attracts us with irresistible magic. Never, as long as the German people has lived, did its inmost nature reveal itself at once so pathetically and so superbly. All the fine features of the national soul and character burst into bloom during that time; enthusiasm, resignation, a profound moral wrath, searching inquiry within the human mind after the sublime, and serious pleasure in systematic thought. Each individual took part in the controversy. The wayfaring pedlar disputed at the evening hearthfire for or against pardons and indulgences, the countryman in the most remote valley heard with amazement of the new heretic whom his spiritual father cursed in every sermon. The bag of the begging monk remained empty, for the women of the village no longer gave cheese and eggs. The tract literature swelled into an ocean, a hundred printing presses were busy spreading the numerous po-

lemic writings, both learned and popular. At every parish church, in every chapter, the divided parties wrangled. At all points resolute clergymen declared for the new doctrine, weaker ones wrestled in anxious doubt, the gates of monasteries were thrown open and the cells speedily emptied. Every month brought something new, something unheard-of, to the people.

It was no longer a quarrel among priests, as Hutten had at first contemptuously called the controversy of the men of Wittenberg with Tetzel. It had become a war of the nation against Roman domination and its supporters. In ever mightier outlines rises the figure of Luther before the eyes of his contemporaries. Outlawed, cursed, persecuted by Pope and Emperor, by princes and prelates, four years suffice to make him the idolised hero of the people. His journey to Worms is described in the style of the Scripture, and the over-zealous compare him to the martyrs of the New Testament. But the cultured classes, also, are drawn into the battle in spite of themselves. Even Erasmus smiles approval, and the soul of Hutten is ablaze for the justice of the new gospel. He no longer writes Latin. In forceful German words, wilder and more impetuous than the men of Wittenberg, with a fire that consumes him, the knight fights his last feuds for the son of the peasant.

This portraiture of Luther, the man in whom for half a generation was concentrated the best life of the people, touches us very nearly. But before we try to understand his soul, let us briefly indicate how his nature affected unprejudiced contemporaries, and first, the testimony of a sober and clear mind who never had close personal rela-

tions with Luther, and, subsequently, in an intermediate position between the men of Wittenberg and the reformers of Switzerland, had ample cause to be dissatisfied with Luther's stubbornness. He was a friar from the old Benedictine monastery of Alpirsbach, in the wildest part of the Black Forest, Ambrosius Blaurer, born at Constance, of a noble family, and thirty years old at the time under discussion. He had left the monastery July 8, 1522, and taken refuge with his family. Upon the request of his abbot, the Governor of the principality of Würtemberg demanded of the Mayor and Council of Constance his extradition to the monastery. Blaurer published a defence from which the following is taken. Shortly afterwards he became preacher in Constance and composed religious hymns; after the last restoration of Duke Ulrich he was one of the reformers of Würtemberg and died at a ripe old age and weary of action at Winterthur, an irreproachable, worthy, temperate man. What he commends and condemns in Luther may be taken as the general opinion entertained by serious minds of those years:

"I call upon God and my conscience to witness that it was not wantonness or any other unworthy motive that caused me to leave the monastery, as they are now crying in the streets, that monks and nuns leave their orders to the detriment of monastic peace and discipline in order to live in the license of the flesh and give the reins to their wantonness and worldly passions. What caused me to escape was honorable, weighty, and great troubles and urgent admonitions of my conscience, based on, and directed by, the Word of God. And I am confident that the occasion and all the circumstances of my escape do not

indicate levity, frivolity, or any improper purpose; for I laid off neither hood nor cloak from my person except a few days after my escape, for the sake of safety, until I reached my place of refuge. Nor did I go to the wars nor elope with a pretty woman, but, without delay, as speedily as possible, went to my dear mother and my relatives, who are of undoubted Christian character and stand in such respect of probity in the city of Constance that they would not advise or aid me towards any improper undertaking.

"Moreover, I trust that my past life and conduct will readily turn aside from me any suspicion of improper, wanton purpose. For while I do not presume anything before God, I may justly boast before men, since necessity now demands it, that I have by respectable conduct kept a good reputation and esteem, much love and favor in the monastery, at school, here, and wherever I have been. So did even the message from Würtemberg, in your hearing, give me the praise that there was no complaint or ill report of me in the monastery of Alpirsbach on account of my character or conduct, but that I carried myself well and piously, except that, as they say, I gave too much heed to the seductive and accursed doctrine of Martin Luther; that I read and kept his writings and taught accordingly, against the prohibition of the abbot, publicly in the monastery and in my sermons to the laity; and that when I was enjoined not to do so, I poured the doctrine secretly and in corners into the souls of some inmates of the monastery. With such commendation of my fathers and fellow-members I am entirely content and well satisfied, and will answer for this one misdeed as a Christian, and on the strength of the

Word of God, and I hope that my excuse will assist not only myself but others also in turning aside a false and groundless suspicion.

"During the last few years, when the writings and books of Martin Luther were issued and became known, they also came to my hands before they were prohibited and condemned by spiritual and temporal authority. And, like other newly printed publications, I looked at and read them. At first such doctrine appeared somewhat strange and curious, even rude and in conflict with long-established theology and wise teachings of the school, also with some ordinances of the papal spiritual law and in contradiction to old, and, as I then deemed, laudable traditions and usages handed down to us by our forefathers. But observing, nevertheless, clearly that this man everywhere in his teachings inserted lucid, plain passages of the Holy Scripture by which all other human teachings should be judged, accepted, or rejected, I wondered much and was thereby induced to read such teachings not once or twice, but often, with diligence and earnest attention, and to reflect upon and compare them with the scripture of the Gospels to which they frequently appeal. But the longer and more assiduously I did so, the more I understood how this very learned and enlightened man treated the Holy Scripture with such great dignity, how altogether purely and delicately he handled it, how he cited it at all points wisely and appropriately, how daintily and skilfully he compared it and connected its parts, explaining and making intelligible the obscure and difficult texts by comparing other passages that were clear and transparent, and I saw his treatment of the Scripture

showed the greatest mastery and gave the most profitable help for thoroughly understanding it, so that every intelligent layman who looks at his books rightly and reads them diligently can clearly understand that this doctrine has a perfectly true, Christian, and firm foundation. For that reason it struck my soul keenly and went deep into my heart, and, gradually, the mist of many old misunderstandings has dropped from my eyes. For this doctrine did not become suspicious to me like those of many other scholars and teachers which I had read before, since it aims not at either dominion, fame, or temporal pleasure, but presents to us simply the poor, despised, crucified Christ, and teaches a pure, modest, tranquil life agreeable in all things to the teachings of Christ, which is also the reason why it is insufferable and too onerous for the haughty, puffed-up doctors who seek in the Scripture rather their own honor and glory than the spirit of God, and to the priests who covet power and rich benefices. Therefore, I will rather lose my body and life and all my fortune than be moved from my position; not on account of Luther, who is personally strange and unknown to me except by his writings—he also, is human, and therefore subject to mistake and error like other men—but on account of the Divine Word which he carries in him so transparent and clear, and proclaims and elucidates with such victorious and triumphant success and with such candid and unterrified spirit.

"The enemies try to embitter this honey for us by the fact that Luther is so irritable, violent, and harsh, and lays hands with such frivolousness on his adversaries, especially the great princes, and lords temporal and

spiritual, that he scolds and blasphemes them and so readily forgets brotherly love and Christian humility. In that respect he has often displeased me also, and I would not lead anybody to do as he does in that regard. Nevertheless, I would not reject his good Christian doctrine on that account or even condemn him personally because I cannot comprehend his mind and the secret judgment of God which perhaps by this one defect will draw many people away from his doctrine. And since he wants to defend not his own cause, but the Word of God, there is room for much indulgence, and this thing may be construed as the zealous wrath of God. Even Christ, the source and mirror of all gentleness, often rudely assailed the stubborn, flinty-hearted Pharisees before all others, cursing them and calling them false hypocrites, whited sepulchres, blind and leaders of the blind, and children of the Devil, as the history of the Gospels shows. Perhaps Luther would be glad to give a great title to many if he could do so with truth. But he may think it inappropriate to call gracious those whose minds are darkened, or good shepherds those who are ravenous wolves, or merciful those who know not mercy. For, without a doubt, had not God been more merciful to him than they, his body would no longer be on earth. But, be that as it may, I will not defend it here. We will reject the scoffing and scolding and gratefully accept the earnestness of his Christian writings for our betterment.

"As I persisted freely in my well-founded purpose and would not be deterred by any human prohibition, being a Christian, the ill-will of the Lord of Alpirsbach and several men of his monastery grew steadily and violently

against me, and the sword of the wrath of God began to cut and cause discord among the brothers. Finally, I was commanded by the highest authority to desist from my purpose and not to speak on this subject to others in the monastery who were favorable to me and inclined to Christian doctrine. Moreover, I was not to preach or read in the monastery, but be in every respect like all other brethren. I wished not to resist, but was willing gladly to suffer such violence in Christian patience, but with the reservation that for myself I should not be prohibited from reading and keeping what, according to my knowledge and insight, was in accordance with Holy Writ and profitable for my salvation; also, that if others should ask me and need such advice I should afford them teachings, writings, books, and brotherly instruction. For so I was commanded by the Lord, my God, and I would hold His command higher than all human obedience. But this proposition was viewed with much disfavor and called intolerable sin; the daily discord increased, the peace of the monastery was undermined and shaken. One said he would no longer remain in this school of heretics, another that the Lutherans must leave the monastery or he would depart, a third pretended that the house of God suffered ill report and worldly disadvantage for my sake, as there was a belief that they were all of my opinion, a fourth spoke of flogging, a fifth of something else, so that it was impossible to tolerate the matter longer, or remain in such discord without violating my conscience. Hence I begged of my abbot and monastery earnestly and with greatest assiduity a gracious and free furlough; I would maintain myself for a

year or two without expense to the house of God at some school or elsewhere, and see if in the meantime by divine interposition the cause of our dissension should come to a peaceable issue, so that we could come together again united in evangelical doctrine with kind and entirely brotherly love.

"But this being also refused by them, I escaped from the monastery advisedly after having taken counsel with wise, learned, prudent, and pious gentlemen and friends."

Thus far Ambrosius Blaurer.

While Brother Ambrosius was still looking with anxious care from the window of his cell over the pines of the Black Forest, another man entered into the gate of a stately castle in the Thuringian forest. Beneath, lay the gloomy dragon's hole, before him the long ridge of the charmed Hoersel mountain, in which dwelt Venus, the fair devil, to whom the Pope, through his unwillingness to forgive sins, had once upon a time driven the penitent knight Tannhäuser. But the withered staff which the Pope on that occasion planted in the ground turned green and fresh over night; God Himself had refuted the Pope. Poor, penitent man, relying on his child-like faith, no longer needs the Roman bishop to find pity and mercy with his Heavenly Father, and the bad Pope himself must, according to the legend, go down into the cave of the old dragon.

THE WARTBURG IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. (Woodcut by H. W. Müller.)

THE OUTLAW OF THE WARTBURG.

THE Emperor was more concerned than ever that an end be made of the stubborn heretic, for he had just made an alliance with the Pope and taken the obligation to root out the false doctrine of Luther. But most of the German princes, and notably the Archbishop of Treves himself, demanded further negotiations in private circles, where personal influence would count, and a regard for the unconciliatory disposition of the Germans compelled the Emperor to yield a second time.

It was now Luther's task to withstand the shrewd and earnest appeals of those whom he himself esteemed. In those negotiations many concessions were made to him, but he must recognise the supreme judgment of a general council. He insisted upon his assertion that even a council could err, as it did err at Constance. At last, Richard of Treves saw that nothing could be gained by negotiation with such a man. Luther himself begged to be dismissed, and the mediators left him with respectful adieus. The hours of these noiseless discussions contributed nothing to the settlement of the dispute, and, in parting, Luther spoke the devout words: "As it pleased the Lord, so has it come about; the name of the Lord be praised!"

Great elation and joy possessed his mind at the wonderful victory of his cause, which he had sustained before the Emperor and the princes of the realm. It was in vain that enemies tried, by finding fault with his appearance and bearing, to detract from the great impression. He had become a hero to the people, who looked up to him with adoration and anxious sympathy. All prudent men saw that this teacher of the people, if he lived, would become a mighty power, not only for the doctrine of the Church but also for the political fortunes of the empire.

The greatest care of his friends was to save him from destruction.

At Worms, Luther was informed that he must disappear for a time. The habits of the Frankish knights, among whom he had loyal admirers, suggested the idea of having him seized by men-at-arms. Prince-Elector Frederick counselled with his faithful men about the abduction. And it was quite in keeping with the character of that prince that he did not want to know the place where Luther was to be kept in order to be able to confirm his ignorance by oath in case of necessity. Nor was it easy to win Luther's favor for the plan, for his brave heart had long since overcome worldly fear, and it was with an enthusiastic joy, in which there was much fanaticism and some humor, that he looked upon the attempts of the Romanists to remove from this world him over whom Another was disposing, Who only spoke through his mouth.

There are many passages to show how complacently he looked upon death. Here is one written during the Wartburg period in the introduction to the Gospel-Reading of the Ten Lepers (Sept. 17, 1521): "Poor friar

that I am, I have once more lighted a fire, I have bitten a great hole in the pockets of the papists because I assailed the confessional. Where shall I now hide myself and where will they now get enough sulphur, pitch, fire, and wood to destroy the venomous heretic? They will have to take out the church windows, since some holy fathers and gentlemen of the cloth preach that they must have air to proclaim the Gospel, i. e., to malign Luther, to cry murder and spit fire. What else could they preach to the poor people? Each one must preach as he can. But 'Kill, kill, kill the heretic!' they cry. 'He wants to turn all things upside down and upset the whole clerical profession, on which all Christendom rests.' Now, I hope, if I am worthy of it, they will succeed and kill me and over me fill the measure of their fathers. But it is not yet time, my hour is not yet come, I must first stir the wrath of the viper brood more fiercely and honestly deserve death from them, that they may have cause to perform a great service to God upon me."

Reluctantly Luther submitted to the plan of his friends. The secret was not easily kept, however adroitly the abduction to the Wartburg was planned. At first only Melanchthon, among the men of Wittenberg, knew of his whereabouts. Now, Luther was not at all the man to submit even to the best-meant intrigues. There soon began a busy running of messengers between the Wartburg and Wittenberg; no matter what care was employed in transmitting the letters, it was difficult to disprove the rumor.

Luther, on the Wartburg, learned sooner than the men of Wittenberg what happened in the great world; he received intelligence of all the new happenings of his uni-

versity and tried to sustain the courage of his friends and to guide their policy. Truly touching are his efforts to encourage Melanchthon, whose impractical nature felt painfully the absence of his strong friend. "It will go along without me," wrote Luther, "only have courage, I am no longer necessary to you; if I come forth and cannot again return to Wittenberg, I shall go into the world. You are the man to hold the fortress of the Lord against the Devil, without me."

His letters were addressed "from the air," "from Patmos," "from the desert," "among the birds which sing sweetly from the trees and praise God with all their might day and night."

Once he tried to be crafty. In a missive to Spalatin he enclosed a decoy letter; it was believed, he wrote, without reason, that he was on the Wartburg; he was living among loyal brothers; it was remarkable that no one thought of Bohemia; there was added a thrust—not a malicious one—at Duke George of Saxony, his most zealous enemy. Spalatin was to lose this letter with careful negligence so that it might reach the hands of his adversaries. But in such diplomacy he was not consistent, for as soon as his leonine nature was aroused by a piece of intelligence he would forthwith resolve to depart for Erfurt or Wittenberg.

He bore the idleness of his sojourn hard. He was treated with the greatest attention by the commander of the castle, and this care was shown, as was then the custom, in the first place, by the loyal keeper furnishing his best in the matter of food and drink. The rich life, the lack of exercise, the fresh mountain air into which the

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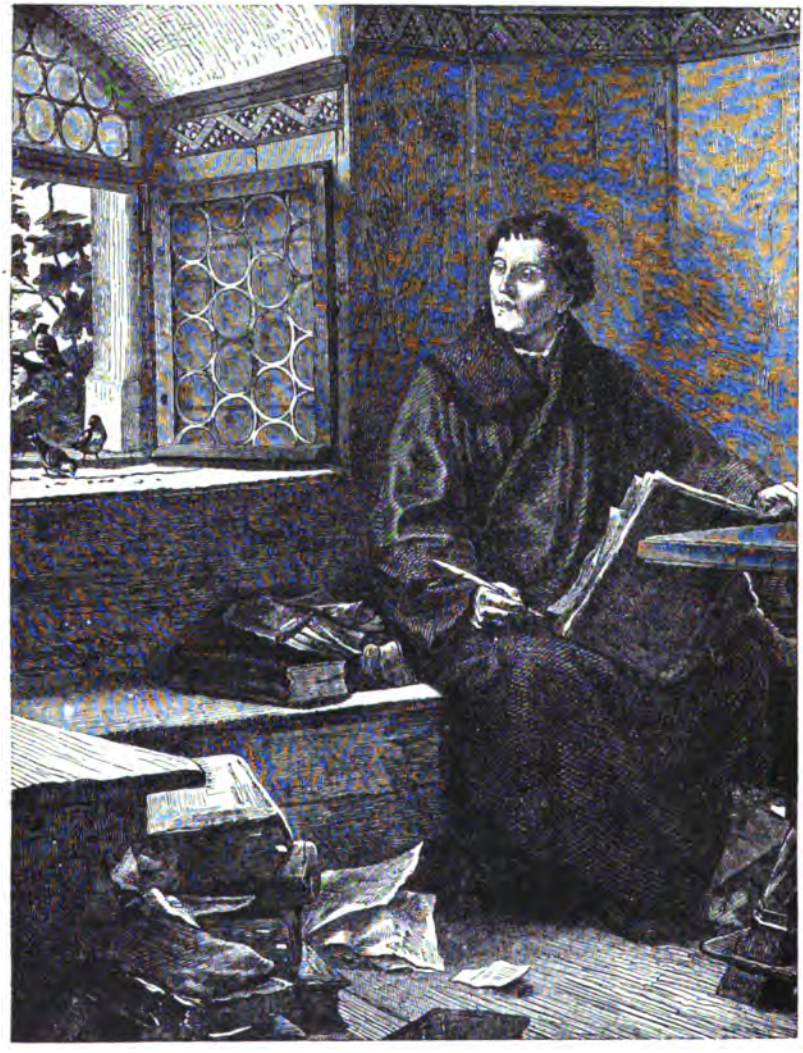

THE OUTLAW OF THE WARTBURG.

theologian was transplanted, had their effects on soul and body. He had brought from Worms a bodily ailment; then there came hours of dark melancholy unfitting him even for work.

Two days in succession he joined in the chase. But his heart was with the few hares and partridges that were being driven into the nets by the throng of men and dogs. "Innocent little beasts! That is the papists' fashion of hunting." To save the life of a little hare he folded it up in the sleeve of his coat, but the dogs came and broke its legs within the folds of the protecting coat. "So does Satan," said he, "chafe against the souls which I try to save."

A CONTEMPORARY'S DESCRIPTION OF LUTHER.

AN EXCELLENT REPORT of the personality of Luther in the days of his residence on the Wartburg is still extant in Johannes Kessler's *Sabbata*, a chronicle of the years 1523–1539, edited by E. Götzinger. When travelling with a friend from Switzerland to Saxony, Kessler met Luther, who had left the Wartburg for a short time and was secretly riding towards Wittenberg in the garb of a knight. Their meeting is so vividly described by the young student that it should not be omitted here.

Johannes Kessler, born about 1502, the son of poor burghers of St. Gall, Switzerland, attended the monastery school of that place, studied theology at Basel, and in the early spring of 1522 went with a companion to Wittenberg to continue his studies under the reformers. In the winter of 1523 he returned home, and, since the new doctrine had no abiding place yet in that country and he was very poor, he resolved to learn a trade. He turned saddler. A little congregation soon gathered about him, he taught, preached, worked in his shop, and wrote books, finally became a school teacher, librarian, and member of the board of education. His was a modest, gentle, pure

nature, with a heart full of love and mild warmth. He took no active part in the theological controversies of his age. His tale begins:

"While travelling to Wittenberg to study the Holy Scripture we came to Jena, in the Thuringian land, in a thunder-storm which, Heaven knows, raged furiously, and after much inquiry in the city for a night's lodging we failed to secure any, being refused everywhere. For it was Shrove-Tuesday, when little care was taken of pilgrims and strangers. We turned to go out of the city and continue our journey in hope of finding a village where we could be lodged. Under the gate we met a respectable man who accosted us kindly and asked whither we were bound so late, as we could not before night reach any house or shelter where we would be kept. Moreover, the road was easily missed and we might be lost. So he advised us to remain.

"We answered: 'Dear father, we called at all the inns to which we were directed hither and thither, but everywhere we were turned away and denied lodging, hence we must needs go on our way.' Whereupon he asked if we had inquired at the Black Bear. We said: 'We did not see it. Tell us, kind sir, where shall we find it?' He showed it to us, a little outside of the city. And when we saw the Black Bear, lo, while all other innkeepers had previously denied us lodging, this one came to the door, received us, and kindly offered to lodge us, and led us into the room.

"There we found a man sitting alone at the table, and before him lay a little book. He greeted us kindly, bade us come near and sit at the table with him. For our

shoes—if I may be permitted to say so—were so covered with dirt and mud that for shame we did not enter the room merrily, but stealthily sat down on a bench near the door. He offered us to drink, which we could not refuse. So, seeing his kindness and cordiality, we sat down at his table, as he had bidden, and had a measure of wine served that we might return the compliment and offer him to drink. We thought nothing else than that he was a horseman who sat there according to the custom of the country, with a red leather cap, in hose and doublet, without armor, a sword at his side, the right hand on the pommel, the left grasping the hilt. His eyes were black and deep set, shining and sparkling like stars, so that one might not well bear to look into them.

"But he soon began to ask whence we came, answering himself, however: 'You are Swiss. From what part of Switzerland?' We replied: 'From St. Gall.' Then he said: 'If you go from here to Wittenberg, as I hear is your intention, you will find good countrymen, Dr. Jerome Schurf and his brother, Dr. Augustin.'

"We said: 'We have letters to them.' Then we asked him again: 'Sir, can you inform us if Martin Luther is at present staying in Wittenberg or at what place else he is?'

"Said he: 'I have certain information that Luther is not at Wittenberg just at present, but he is soon to go there. Philippus Melanchthon is there, however; he teaches the Greek language, as others also teach the Hebrew. In good faith, I will counsel you to study both, for they are necessary to understand the Holy Scripture.'

"Said we: 'God be praised. For if God gives us

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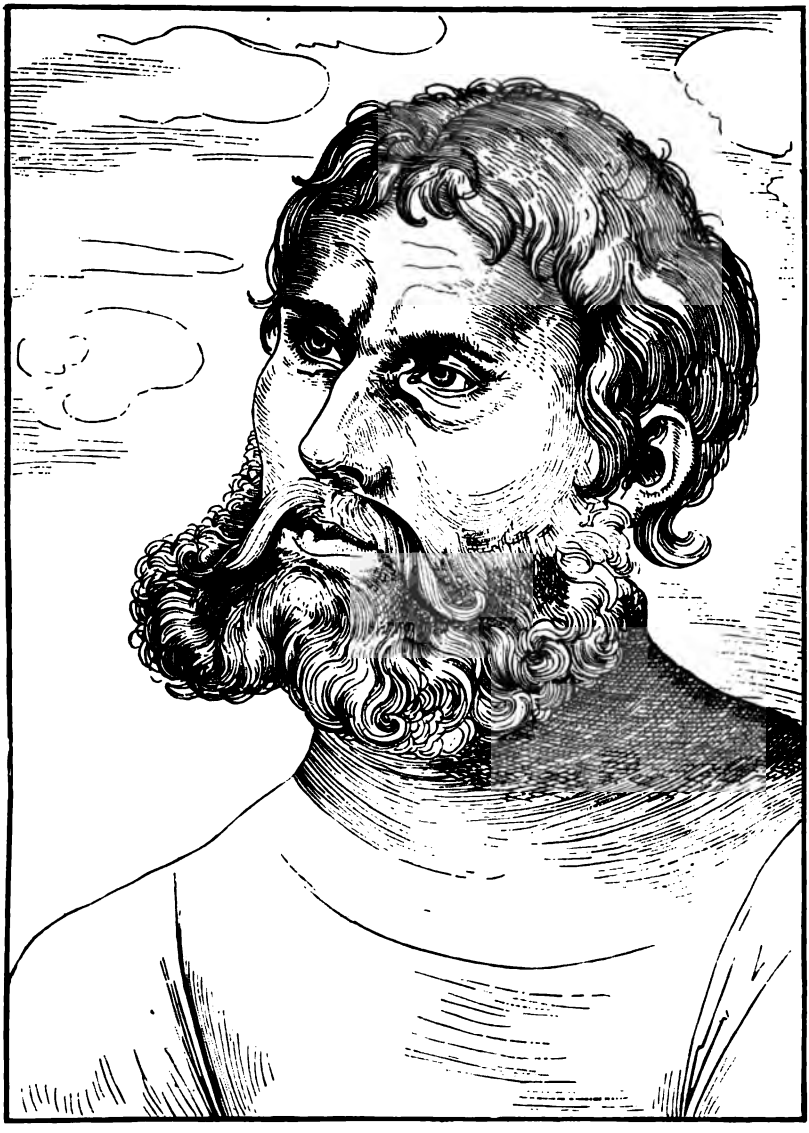

LUTHER AS YOUNKER GEORGE. (After the woodcut of Lucas Cranach.)

life we will not stop till we see and hear this man. For his sake we have undertaken this journey, since we heard that he wants to upset the priesthood and the mass as not being based on a solid foundation. Since we have been educated and destined by our parents from childhood to be priests, we would fain hear what manner of instruction he would give us and by what right he means to carry out his purpose.'

"After such words he asked: 'Where did you study so far?' We answered: 'At Basel.' Then he said: 'How is it at Basel? Is Erasmus Roterdamus there yet? What does he do?'

"'Sir,' we said, 'we know nothing else than that all is well there. Erasmus is there, also, but what he does is unknown and hidden from all, since he keeps himself very quiet and secret.'

"These speeches seemed very strange to us in the horseman, that he could speak of the two Schurfs, of Philippus and Erasmus, likewise of the need of both the Greek and the Hebrew tongues. Furthermore, he spoke a few Latin words between, so that it would seem to us he was a different person from a common horseman.

"'Dear sirs,' he asked us, 'what do they think of Luther in the Swiss country?'

"'Sir, there, as everywhere, there are various opinions. Some cannot extol him enough and thank God that He revealed His truth through him and made known the errors; others, above all the clergy, condemn him as an intolerable heretic.'

"He said: 'I can imagine it well, it is the priests.'

"With such conversation we began to feel at home,

so that my companion picked up the book lying before him and opened it. It was a Hebrew psalter. He laid it down again quickly and the horseman put it away. Thence arose still more doubt as to who he was. And my companion said: 'I would give a finger off my hand if I understood that language.' 'You will understand it well enough if you are industrious,' said the stranger; 'I also desire to learn it better, and practise it daily.'

"In the meantime the day went down; it became very dark, and the innkeeper came to the table. When he heard our great desire for Mr. Luther he said: 'Dear boys, if you had been here two days ago you would have been gratified, for here at this table he sat, at that place,' pointing with his finger. We were much vexed and angry that we had been delayed and vented our ill-humor on the muddy and bad roads which had hindered us. Yet we said: 'We are glad, however, that we sit in the house and at the table where he sat.' The innkeeper laughed and went out.

"After a little while the innkeeper called me out before the door. I was frightened and thought of what I might have done that was improper or had given offence.

"And the landlord said to me: 'Since I see that you honestly desire to see and hear Luther—it is he that sits with you.'

"I took the words for a jest and said: 'Mine host, you are making sport of me and want to satisfy my desire by an illusion.' He replied: 'It is he, assuredly. But do not act as though you knew or recognised him. I allowed the landlord to be right, but could not believe it. I returned into the room and sat down at the table. I was

anxious to tell my companion what the landlord said. At last I turned to him and whispered secretly: 'The landlord told me that man was Luther.' Like myself, he would not believe it, and said: 'Perhaps he said it was Hutten and you did not understand him right?' Since the horseman's garb and his manner also reminded me more of Hutten, the knight, than of Luther, the monk, I was easily persuaded that he said: 'It is Hutten,' the beginnings of the two names sounding alike. What I said after that, therefore, was uttered as though I was speaking to Sir Huldrich *ab* Hutten, the knight.

"During all this, there entered two merchants who also wanted to remain over night, and after undressing and laying aside their outer garments and spurs, one of them laid by his side an unbound book. Martinus asked what the book was. He said: "It is Doctor Luther's explication of some gospels and epistles, only recently printed and issued. Did you never see it?' Martinus replied: 'They will reach me soon.' The landlord said: 'Now sit down at the table, we will eat.' But we spoke and asked the landlord to be indulgent with us and give us something apart. But the landlord said: 'My dear lads sit at the table with the gentlemen, I will serve you in proper manner.' Martinus hearing this, said: 'Come with us, I will settle the bill with the landlord.'

"During the meal Martinus spoke many pious, kindly discourses, that the merchants and ourselves attended more to his words than to the food. Among other things, he complained with a sigh that just then the princes and lords were assembled at the Diet at Nuremberg on account of the Word of God, the pending contro-

versies, and the burdens of the nation, but were inclined to nothing more than spending their time in costly tourneys, sleigh rides, immoral practices, and ostentatious pageantries, whereas piety and earnest prayers to God would be of much greater help. 'But such are our Christian princes.' Further, he said he hoped that the truth of the Gospels would bear more fruit among our children and posterity, who would not be poisoned by the errors of popery but would stand upon the clear truth and the Word of God, than among the parents in whom error was so deeply rooted that it could not well be eradicated.

"Afterwards the merchants also stated their own opinions, and the elder one said: 'I am a simple, plain layman, and not expert in these controversies, but this I say: As the matter appears to me, Luther must be either an angel from Heaven or a devil from Hell. I am minded to spend ten florins for his sake that I may confess to him, for I believe he would and could well enlighten my conscience.' In the meantime the landlord came to us and said: 'Have no care for the bill, Martinus settled for the supper for you.' This made us very happy, not for the sake of the money and the pleasure of the meal, but that this man had entertained us as guests. After supper the merchants arose and went into the stable to provide for the horses. Meanwhile, Martinus remained alone with us in the room. We thanked him for his kindness and the honor done us and gave him to understand that we thought he was Ulrich *ab* Hutten. But he said: 'I am not he.'

"The landlord came in and Martinus said: 'I have become a nobleman this night, for these Swiss take me for Ulrich *ab* Hutten.' Said the landlord: 'You are

not he, but you are Martinus Luther.' He smiled and said, jesting: 'They take me for Hutten and you for Luther, soon I shall be Marcolfus.'* And after such conversation he took a tall beer glass and said, after the fashion of the country: 'My Swiss friends, let us drink one friendly draught for a blessing.' And as I was about to take the glass from him he changed the glass and offering me a glass of wine instead, said: 'You are unaccustomed to beer, drink this wine.' With that he arose, threw the cloak over his arm and took his leave. He offered us his hand and said: 'When you reach Wittenberg, give my love to Dr. Jerome Schurf.' Said we: 'We shall gladly do so, but how shall we name you that he may understand your greeting?' Said he: 'Say nothing more than this: He who is coming sends his greeting, and he will understand the words at once.' So he left us and went to rest.

"The merchants returned to the room and ordered the landlord to bring them another drink, over which they held much conversation with respect to the guest who had sat with them and who he might be. The landlord intimated that he took him to be Luther, and the merchants were soon convinced and regretted that they had spoken awkwardly of him. They said they would rise earlier in the morning before he rode off, and would beg him not to be angry with them nor remember it with ill-feeling that they did not recognise him. So it was done, and they found him in the morning in the stable. But Martinus replied: 'You said last night at the evening meal you

*A popular comical figure, not unlike the Punch and Judy of modern times. See *Dialogue of Solomon and Saturn* (Marcolf).

would spend ten florins on account of Luther to confess to him. If you ever come to confess to him you will see and be sure whether I am Martinus Luther.' Further than that he did not disclose his identity, but mounted soon after and rode towards Wittenberg.

"The same day we travelled towards Naumburg, and as we came to a village—it lies at the foot of a mountain which is called Orlamunde, and the village is named Nasshausen—there was a stream flowing through the village which had overflowed with excessive rains so that no one could ride across on horseback. We stopped in that village and by accident met the two merchants at the inn, who entertained us as guests for the sake of Luther.

"The following Saturday, the day before the first Sunday in Lent, we entered the house of Dr. Jerome Schurf to deliver our letters. As we were called into the room, lo, we found the horseman Martinus, just as in Jena. And with him were Philippus Melanchthon, Justus Jodocus Jonas, Nicolaus Amsdorf, and Dr. Augustin Schurf, who were telling him what had happened at Wittenberg during his absence. He greeted us and laughed, pointed with his finger and said: 'This is Philip Melanchthon, of whom I have told you.'"

In the ingenuous story of Kessler nothing is more remarkable than the serene unconcern of the mighty man who rode through Thuringia, outlawed and accursed, his heart filled with passionate anxiety for the greatest danger threatening his doctrine—the fanaticism of his own partisans.

PROBLEMS AND TASKS.

LUTHER had cast aside all the authority of the Church; now he stood alone, shuddering; only one last thing was left to him—the Scripture.

The old Church had represented Christianity in a continuous development. A living tradition of councils and decrees of the Popes, running along beside the Scripture, had kept the faith in constant motion; like a convenient river, it had adapted itself to the sharp angles of national character, of great needs of the times. True, this lofty idea of an eternally living organism was not preserved in its pristine purity, the best part of its life had vanished, the empty shell only was preserved, the ancient democratic Church had been transformed into the irresponsible dominion of a few, soiled with all the vices of a conscienceless aristocracy, in crying opposition to reason and the popular heart. That which Luther could substitute would set man free from a chaos of soulless malformation. But it threatened other dangers.

What was the Bible? Between the oldest and the latest work of the holy book there lay, perhaps, two thousand years. Even the New Testament was not written by Christ Himself, not even in all cases by such as had

heard the holy doctrine from His mouth. It was compiled long after His death. Some things in it might have been handed down inaccurately. The whole was written in a strange language difficult to understand. Even the greatest intelligence incurred the liability of misconstruction unless the grace of God illumined the commentator even as it had illumined the apostles. The old Church had found a short remedy, the sacrament of the priestly office gave the required illumination, nay, the holy father even claimed the divine power of deciding the right, although his will might be in conflict with the Scriptures. The reformer had nothing but his feeble human knowledge and his prayer.

First, it was inevitable that he must employ his reason; even towards Holy Writ a certain amount of criticism was necessary. It did not remain hidden from Luther that the books of the New Testament were of different value; it is known that he did not esteem Revelation very highly, and that the Epistle of James was held by him to be an "epistle of straw." But his opposition to details never made him doubt the whole. Immovable stood his faith that the Holy Scripture, with the exception of a few books, contained divine revelation down to the word and the letter. It was to him the dearest thing on earth, the foundation of all his knowledge; he so completely entered into it that he lived amidst its figures as in the present. The more threatening the feeling of his responsibility, the more ardent the fervor with which he clung to the Scripture. And a strong instinct for the rational and expedient helped him to surmount many dangers, his shrewdness had nothing of the hairsplitting

sophistry of the old teachers; he despised unnecessary subtleties, and, with admirable tact, would willingly leave undetermined what appeared unessential. But unless he would become either infidel or insane, nothing was left but to base the new doctrine on words and conditions of civilisation which had life fifteen hundred years before his time. And yet in some cases he became a victim of that which his opponent Eck called the black letter.

Under such compelling influences his method was formed. If he had a question to solve, he collected all those passages of the Scripture which seemed to contain an answer; he tried searchingly to understand each passage in its context, then drew the sum of them. That in which they agreed was placed in advance; where they deviated from one another he modestly tried to find a solution that united even the conflicting things. The result he fixed inwardly among temptations, by fervent prayer.

With such a procedure he was bound, at times, to arrive at results that could be contested even by the ordinary human understanding. When he undertook, in 1522, for instance, to place marriage on a new moral foundation from the Scriptures, the reason and needs of the people were certainly on his side in subjecting to a sharp analysis the eighteen grounds of the spiritual law for preventing or dissolving marriage, and condemning the improper favor shown to the rich over the poor. But it was, nevertheless, odd if Luther tried to prove from the Bible alone what degrees of relationship were allowed or prohibited, especially as he also referred to the Old Testament in which several peculiar marriages were concluded without contradiction from old Jehovah. Without a doubt, God

had permitted his chosen ones repeatedly to have two wives.

It was the same method that in 1529, during the negotiations with the followers of Zwingli, made him so stubborn, at the time when he wrote on the table in front of him "this *is* my body," and looked with a dark frown upon the tears and the outstretched hands of Zwingli.

Never was he more narrow, yet never more mighty; a terrible man who had wrung his convictions from doubt and the Devil by the most violent inward struggles. It was an imperfect process, and his adversaries directed their attacks upon it not without success. With it his doctrine underwent the fate of all human wisdom. But in this method there was also a strong spiritual process in which his own reason, the culture and popular needs of his time were asserted more powerfully than he himself suspected. And it became the starting-point from which conscientious research has worked up to the highest spiritual liberty.

Together with this great trial there came to the exiled monk on the Wartburg smaller temptations; he had long since, by almost superhuman mental activity, overcome those things which, as impulses of the senses, were looked upon with great suspicion; now nature reasserted itself vigorously, and he repeatedly asks Melanchthon to pray for him on that score.

At this particular juncture, fate ordained that the restless mind of Karlstadt at Wittenberg should take up the question of the marriage of priests, and in an essay on celibacy he came to the conclusion that priests and monks were not bound by the vow of celibacy. The men

of Wittenberg generally assented, first Melanchthon, who was least hampered in regard to this question, never having himself been consecrated and having been married for two years. Thus there were thrown into Luther's soul from without thoughts and moral problems the threads of which were destined to stretch over his entire subsequent life. What of genuine joy and worldly happiness was vouchsafed to him thereafter depended upon the answer he found for this question. What made it possible for him to endure the later years was the happiness of his home; from that point the flower of his rich heart was destined to unfold. So mercifully did fate at that particular time send to the lonely one the message which was to link him afresh and more closely with his people.

And his treatment of this question again is characteristic. His devout soul and the conservative feature of his entire nature rebelled against the hasty and superficial manner of Karlstadt's argument. It is safe to assume that many of the very things which he felt within himself made him suspicious whether the Devil was not using this delicate question to tempt the children of God. And yet, just at that time during his imprisonment, he felt extreme pity for the poor monks in the restraint of the monastery. He searched the Scriptures: the marriage of priests was easily disposed of. But of the monks there was not a word in the Bible. "The Scripture is silent, man is uncertain."

Then occurred to him the ridiculous notion that his own closest friends might marry, and he wrote to the cautious Spalatin: "Good God, our Wittenberg friends want to give wives to the monks, too! Well, they shall not

hang one about my neck," and he warns him ironically: "Take good care that you do not yourself marry." But the problem occupied him continually, nevertheless. A man lives fast in such great times. Gradually, by Melanchthon's argument, and, we may assume, after fervent prayer, he arrived at certainty. What turned the scale, though unconsciously to him, was the final conclusion that it had become rational and necessary for a better moral foundation of social life, to open the monasteries. Nearly three months he had wrestled with the question; on November 1, 1521, he wrote the above-mentioned letter to his father.

The effect of his words upon the people was beyond measure; everywhere there was a stir in the corridors; from nearly all monastery gates slipped monks and nuns; at first singly, in clandestine flight; soon, whole monasteries disbanded.

In the following spring, when Luther, with greater care in his heart, returned to Wittenberg, the runaway nuns and monks caused him much trouble. Secret letters were forwarded to him from all parts, frequently from excited nuns who, when children, had been sent to convents by hard-hearted parents and now, without money or protection, sought the help of the great reformer. It was not unnatural that they crowded to Wittenberg. There came nine nuns from the aristocratic convent of Nimbschen, among them a Staupitz, two Zeschaus, and Catharine of Bora; again there were sixteen nuns to be cared for, and so on. He pitied the poor people very much; he wrote in their behalf, and ran around to place them in respectable families.

At times, there was too much of it for him, the throngs of escaped monks molesting him particularly. He complains: "They want to marry at once and are the most unskilful men for any work." By his bold solution of a difficult question he gave great offence; he had painful sensations himself, for while among those who were returning to civil society in a tumult there were high-minded men, there were also coarse and bad ones. But all those things did not confuse him for a moment. It was his way that opposition only made him more resolute.

When in 1524 he published the story of the sufferings of a nun, Florentina of Oberweimar, he repeated in the dedication what he had preached so often: "God often proclaims in the Scriptures that he wants no enforced service and no one shall become His unless he do so willingly and lovingly. God help us! Why should we be so unreasonable? Should we not use our understanding and our ears? I say it again, God wants no enforced service; I say it a third time, I say it a hundred thousand times, God wants no enforced service."

Thus Luther entered the last period of his life. His disappearance in the Thuringian forest had caused tremendous excitement. The adversaries trembled at the wrath which arose in the cities and in the country against those who were called his murderers. But the interruption of his public activity was fatal to him, notwithstanding. As long as he was at Wittenberg, the centre of the fight, his work, his pen had ruled with overshadowing power over the great movement of the spirits in South

and North, now the movement worked arbitrarily in different directions, in many heads.

One of the oldest companions of Luther began the confusion, Wittenberg itself became the scene of an adventurous movement, and Luther could tarry no longer in the Wartburg. Once before he had been in Wittenberg secretly, now he returned there publicly, against the wishes of the Prince-Elector. And then he began a heroic struggle against old friends and against the conclusions drawn from his own teachings. His work was more than that of a man. He fulminated unremittingly from the pulpit, in the study his pen was flying. But he was unable to bring back every apostate mind, he himself could not prevent the mob in the cities from raging with rude irreverence against institutions of the old Church and against hated persons, the excitement of the people from causing political storms, the knight from rising against the prince, the peasant against the knight. And what was more, he could not prevent the spiritual liberty which he had obtained for himself and others from producing in pious and learned men an independent judgment with regard to faith and life, a judgment conflicting with his own convictions. There came the stormy years of iconoclasm, of anabaptism, of the peasant wars, the miserable quarrel about the sacrament. How often the form of Luther rose, during that time, gloomy and mighty, above the quarrelling people, how often did the contrariness of men and secret doubts of his own fill him with anxious care for the future of Germany!

For, in a savage age, accustomed to kill with fire and sword, this man conceived those spiritual battles loftier

and purer than all else. Any employment of physical force was hateful to him even during the time of his greatest personal danger; he would not be protected by his sovereign, nay, he wanted no human protection for his doctrine. He fought with a sharp quill against his enemies, but the only pyre which he lighted was for a paper; he hated the Pope as he did the Devil, but he always preached peace and Christian tolerance towards papists; he suspected many of being in secret league with the Devil, but he never burned a witch. In all Catholic countries the fires blazed over those who professed the new faith, even Hutten was strongly suspected of having cut off the ears of some monks; Luther had hearty compassion for the humiliated Tetzel, and wrote him a letter of consolation. So humane was his sentiment.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL COMPLICATIONS.

OBEDIENCE to the authorities as being instituted by God was Luther's main political principle; only when the service of his God demanded it did contradiction blaze up. On his departure from Worms he was ordered not to preach, he who had just been outlawed. But while he did not allow his preaching to lag, the honest man was still filled with fear that it might be construed as disobedience. His conception of the constitution of the empire was still quite ancient and quite popular. As the subject must obey the authorities, so the princes and electors must obey the Emperor according to the law of the empire.

In the person of Charles V. he took a human interest throughout his life, not alone during that early time when he greeted him as the "dear, sweet youth," but even later, when he knew well that the Spanish Burgundian allowed the German Reformation no more than political toleration. "He is pious and quiet"; said he of the Emperor, "he speaks in a year not so much as I do in a day; he is a child of fortune." He readily praised the Emperor's moderation, modesty, and forbearance. When he had begun to condemn the policy of the Emperor, and in secret

mistrusted his character, he took care that among the guests of his table the ruler of the empire was spoken of reverentially, and said to the younger ones apologetically: "A politician cannot be so candid as we clergymen."

As late as 1530 it was his opinion that it was wrong on the part of the Prince-Elector to resist the Emperor with armed force; it was 1537 before he reluctantly submitted to the freer view of his circle—but still the endangered prince must not begin the attack. So vivid remained in the man of the people the time-honored tradition of a firm, well-organised, federated state at a time when the proud structure of the old Saxon and Frankish emperors was crumbling so fast.

Yet in such loyalty to the empire there was not a trace of a slavish disposition; when his sovereign once induced him to write a letter intended for publication, his veracity rebelled against the address to the Emperor, "most gracious lord," saying the Emperor was not graciously disposed towards him. And in his frequent intercourse with the nobility he showed a reckless candor which more than once became terrible to the courtiers. He told his own sovereign the truth, in all humility, in such a manner as only a great character dared and only a good-hearted one could listen to.

On the whole, he thought little of the German princes, however much he esteemed some individually. Frequent and just are his complaints of their incapacity, their licentiousness, their vices. He also liked to speak of the nobility with irony; the awkwardness of most of them displeased him exceedingly. And he felt a democratic aversion for the hard and selfish lawyers who carried on the

business of the princes, striving for favor and tormenting the poor people; he opened to the best of them only a very doubtful prospect of the grace of God.

On the other hand, his whole heart was with the oppressed; he sometimes scolded the peasants, their stubbornness, their greed in selling grain, but he also often praised their class, looked with hearty compassion on their burdens and remembered that he originally was one of them.

But all those things were of the temporal government; he was in the service of the spiritual. The popular view was firmly entrenched in his mind that two governing powers must rule the people side by side, the power of the Church and the force of the princes. And he was amply justified in proudly contrasting his province of duties and rights with temporal politics. In his spiritual domain there was public spirit, self-sacrifice, a wealth of ideal life; in the temporal government he found everywhere narrow self-seeking, robbery, fraud, and weakness. He angrily contended that the authorities should not presume to direct what belonged to the minister and the autonomy of his congregation. He judged all politics from the interest of his creed according to the law of the Bible. Where the word of the Scripture seemed to him to be endangered by temporal politics he raised his voice, recking not whom it hurt.

It was not his fault that he was strong and the princes were weak, and no reproach can attach to him, the monk, the professor, the minister, if the league of Protestant princes stood helpless in the face of the shrewd diplomacy of the Emperor as a herd of deer. He was clearly con-

scious that Italian politics were not his affair; if the active Landgrave of Hesse, on one occasion did not follow his spiritual advice, Luther esteemed him all the more for it in secret. "He has a head of his own, he is successful, he has an understanding of worldly affairs."

Since Luther's return to Wittenberg a flood of democracy was roaring among the people. Luther had opened the monasteries, now there was a demand for the adjustment of other social evils, the distress of the peasants, the church tithes, the traffic in benefices, the bad administration of the law. Luther's honest heart sympathised with this movement. He admonished and scolded the landlords and princes. But when the wild floods of the peasant wars began to deluge his work, when their bloody violence outraged his soul and he felt that visionaries and riôters exercised sway over the bands of peasants and threatened extinction to his teachings, he hurled himself against the rude masses in the highest wrath. Fierce and warlike sounded his appeal to the princes, the thing most horrible to him had happened, the gospel of love was disgraced by the arbitrary insolence of those who called themselves his adherents.

His policy was the true one in this point, also; there was in Germany, unfortunately, no better power than that of the princes; on them rested, in spite of all, the future of the fatherland. Neither the serf peasantry, nor the robber knights, nor the disunited imperial cities standing like islands in the roaring billows, afforded any guaranty. He was quite right in the matter, but the same hard-headed, inflexible nature which up to that time had made his fights against the hierarchy so popular, was now

turned against the people itself. A cry of amazement and horror ran through the masses. He was a traitor. He who for eight years had been the favorite and hero of the people became suddenly the faithless, most hated man. Again his safety and his life were threatened; even five years later it was dangerous for him, on account of the peasants, to travel to Mansfeld to his sick father. The fury of the masses also worked against his doctrine, the hedge-preachers and the new apostles treated him as a lost, depraved man. He was excommunicated, he was outlawed, he was cursed by the people.

UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

LUTHER'S WIFE. (After Lucas Cranach.)

LUTHER'S MARRIAGE.

MANY well-meaning men had disapproved his assault on celibacy and convent life. The country noblemen threatened to seize the outlaw in the highway because he had destroyed the nunneries into which, as in foundlings' homes, the legitimate children of the poor nobility were thrown in early youth. The Roman party triumphed, the new heresy was deprived of that which had made it powerful up to that time. Luther's life and doctrine seemed to be doomed to destruction.

At this juncture, Luther decided to marry.

For two years, Catharine von Bora had lived in the house of the city clerk, afterwards Mayor Reichenbach of Wittenberg, a strong, stately girl; like many others, the forsaken daughter of a family belonging to the country nobility of Meissen. Twice Luther had endeavored to secure a husband for her, as he had, with paternal care, done for several of her associates. At last Catharine declared she would marry no man unless Luther himself or his friend Amsdorf.

Luther was astonished, but he decided quickly. Accompanied by Lucas Cranach, he asked for her hand and was married on the spot. Then he invited his friends to

the wedding dinner, asked at court for the venison which the sovereign was wont to present to his professors at weddings, and received the table wine as a wedding present from the city of Wittenberg.

Luther's mind at that time is a curious study. His entire being was at the highest tension, the wild primitive power of his nature worked in all directions; he was shaken to his inmost depths by the misery of burned villages and the bodies of the slain which he saw all about him. Had he been a fanatic in his ideas he might have ended, then, in despair. But above the stormy unrest which is perceptible in him up to his marriage, there shone to him like a pure light, just at that time, the conviction that he was the guardian of divine right, and in order to defend civil order and morals it was for him to lead the opinions of men, not to follow them.

However violently he declaimed in special things, he appears particularly conservative at this particular time, more firmly resolved within himself than ever. Besides, it is true, he was of opinion that he was not destined to live much longer, and during many hours he longingly awaited martyrdom. Thus he was in perfect accord with himself when he concluded his marriage. He had convinced himself completely of the necessity and scriptural propriety of marriage; for the last few years he had urged all his acquaintances to marry, finally even an old opponent, the Archbishop of Mayence. Albert??

He gives two reasons himself that influenced him in his determination to marry. He had deprived his father of his son for many years, it was to him like an atonement to leave to old Hans a grandson when he should die.

There was also defiance; the adversaries triumphed that Luther was humiliated and all the world was offended at him; he wanted to give them still more offence in his good cause.

His was a vigorous nature, but there was in him not a trace of coarse sensuality. And we may assume that the best reason, which he confesses to no friend, was, after all, the decisive one. For a long time the talk of the people had known more than himself, now he knew himself that Catharine regarded him with favor. "I am not in love nor in passion, but I like her," he writes to one of his dearest friends.

And this marriage, concluded in opposition to the opinion of his contemporaries and the scornful howls of his adversaries, became an alliance to which we owe as much as to the years when he, a clergyman of the old Church, had borne arms for his theological convictions. For, from that time a husband, father, and citizen, he became also the reformer of the domestic life of his nation, and those very blessings emanating from his days on earth, in which Protestants and Catholics to-day have an equal share, came from the marriage between an excommunicated monk and a runaway nun.

For he was destined to work twenty-one laborious years more in developing his nation, and his greatest work, the translation of the Bible, was finished during that time; in this work, which he completed in company with his friends of Wittenberg, he acquired the fullest control over the language of the people, which by this work, for the first time, developed its wealth and power.

We know with what grand purpose he undertook

that work, he wanted to create a book for the people, he industriously studied forms of speech, proverbs, and technical terms living in the mouth of the people. The Humanists often wrote an awkward involved style with unwieldy sentences, a degenerate reminiscence of the Latin style. Now, the nation received for daily reading a work expressing in simple words the most profound wisdom and the best spiritual treasures of the time.

Together with the other works of Luther, the Bible became the foundation of the New-German language. And this language in which our whole literature and spiritual life found its expression, has become an indestructible possession which even in the saddest times, and though disfigured and defaced, has yet served to remind the several German tribes that they are one. And even at the present time the language of culture, poetry, and science which Luther created is the bond that holds together all German minds in union.

Nor did Luther render less important services for the civil life of the Germans. Domestic devotion, marriage, and education of children, municipal life and school affairs, manners, recreations, all sentiments of the heart, all social pleasures were consecrated by his teachings and writings. Everywhere he strove to set new goals and to lay deeper foundations. Not a department of human duty about which he did not compel the people to reflect. His influence spread far and wide among the people by his numerous sermons and short writings, and also by countless letters in which he gave advice and consolation to special inquirers.

If he urged his contemporaries unremittingly to ex-

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

amine whether a desire of the heart was justified or not, what the father owed to the child, the subject to the authorities, the councilman to the citizens; the progress made through him was so great for the reason that here also he emancipated the conscience of the individual and substituted everywhere spiritual self-control in place of external compulsion against which selfishness had previously defiantly rebelled. How finely he comprehended the necessity of developing children by school education, especially in the dead languages, how warmly he recommended his beloved music for introduction in the schools, how great his foresight became when he admonished the councilmen to found public libraries. And again, how conscientiously he sought to secure rights for the hearts of lovers in engagements and marriages, as against hard parental authority. His horizon, it is true, was bounded by the words of the Scripture, but ever through his preaching, action, scolding, there sounds the beautiful keynote of his broadly human nature, the need of liberty and courtesy, of love and morality. He overthrew the old sacrament of marriage but he shaped more highly, nobly, freely the spiritual relations between husband and wife. He attacked the clumsy convent schools, and everywhere in village and city, wherever his influence reached, better institutions of culture for the youth grew up. He abolished the mass and Latin church hymns; in return, he gave the regular sermon and the church hymn to both admirers and opponents.

The great importance which Luther's teaching acquired not only in the heart of the people but in the political affairs of the empire became apparent in Luther's

life as early as nine years after the days of Worms. At Worms he was looked upon as a solitary, damnable heretic with whose death the dangerous, false doctrine would cease In 1530 at the Diet of Augsburg the princes and estates of the Empire who had renounced their adherence to the old Church, submitted to the Emperor a confession of faith which became the basis of a secure political position for Protestantism. In spite of all the clauses appended, it was in fact the first treaty of peace which the victorious new doctrine concluded with the Holy Roman Empire.

It was a strange dispensation that honest Luther, as he had done at the Wartburg in years gone by, once more awaited the result in hiding at another fortified place of his sovereign, the fortress of Coburg, in the dress and with the beard of a knight, and once more he dated his letters mysteriously from the wilderness, or from the kingdom of the birds, encouraging Melanchthon to remain steadfast. For, while his friends and fellow-laborers were engaged in composing the Confession of Augsburg, he who was still an outlaw could not be led into the hands of Catholic lords or under the eyes of the Emperor who had outlawed him.

This sentence of outlawry of 1521 had, however, lost its force. A few months after it had been pronounced, the growing excitement of the people and the immoderate zeal of other malcontents forced the enemies of Luther to admit that it would be very fortunate if Luther, who had disappeared, were still alive. Since that time he had risen against the socialistic agitation among the people with equal might as against popery; and by the magic of his

strong character as well as the wealth of his soulful sentiment he had done so much for law and order among the people that even his adversaries felt some of the good effects.

He had met with great successes, but at the same time he found the limits of his influence. At Worms he was the only one, the true representative of the popular conscience and the spiritual leader of the whole powerful movement which was rising in the people. In 1530 he was the head and leader of a great party, but only a party, beside which other factions and parties were arising. Even within the old Church the respect for public opinion had become greater, and faith was more sincere and heartfelt. Beside Luther's, the teachings of Zwingli had also gained ground, and among the lower classes the ideas of the Anabaptists worked against him as against the structure of the old Church.

Nor did Luther himself escape change. He was no longer the martyr longing for death, but the prudent adviser of princes and a zealous, severe architect of his new Church. And the man who at the Wartburg wrestled in scruples of conscience over the celibacy of monks, was writing not only explanations of Biblical texts but loving letters, full of good humor, to his own home, to the companions of his table, and to his little son, about the diet of jack-daws that crowded around the towers of the fortress of Coburg, and about a beautiful heavenly garden in which pious children sing and play, ride horses with golden reins, and shoot with the crossbow. The apostle of the new gospel became a great spiritual paterfamilias to the people.

LUTHER'S PRIVATE LIFE.

AS THE YEARS advanced, Luther felt ever more keenly the divine nature of all that the world offered which was sweet, good, and hearty. In that sense he was always pious and always wise, both out in nature and in his innocent pleasantry with his companions, while teasing his wife, or holding his children in his arms. Full of joy at its splendor he stood before a tree hanging full of fruit: "If Adam had not fallen, we should always have admired all trees." Astonished, he took a big pear in his hand: "Lo, six months ago it was lower under the ground than it is long and big now, and was hidden in the extreme end of the root. These minute and least observed creatures are the greatest wonders. God is in the smallest creature, as in the leaf of a tree or a blade of grass."

Two little birds made a nest in Dr. Luther's garden and flew home in the evening, often frightened by passers-by; he called to them: "Oh, you dear little birds, do not fly away, I love you with all my heart if you could only believe me. But thus we also lack faith in our God."

He took great pleasure in the company of honest men;

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

LUTHER PRAYING FOR MELANCHTHON'S LIFE. (After Gustav König.)

he then drank wine merrily, and the conversation coursed lively over big things and small. He judged with splendid humor his enemies and acquaintances, laughed and told merry stories, and when he got into discussions would rub his hands over his knee, which gesture was peculiar to him. Often he would sing to himself, play the lute, or direct a chorus. Whatever made men honorably merry was pleasing to him, his favorite art was music; he judged leniently of dancing and—fifty years before Shakespeare—spoke benevolently of comedy, for he said that it teaches like a mirror how each should conduct himself.

When he sat together with Melanchthon, it was Master Philip, the mild, the scholar, who would add a wise qualification to the too daring assertions of his strong friend. If there was talk of rich people and Frau Catharine could not refrain from observing longingly: "Had my lord been so inclined he could have become very rich," Melanchthon answered gravely: "That is impossible, for those who work for the general good cannot follow their own advantage."

There was one subject, however, about which the two men were apt to get into disputes. Melanchthon was very fond of astrology, while Luther looked upon that science with sovereign contempt. On the other hand, by his method of Biblical exegesis—and also, by secret political cares—Luther had reached the conviction that the end of the world was near at hand, which, again, appeared very doubtful to the learned Melanchthon. So, when Melanchthon began to speak about celestial signs and aspects and explained Luther's successes by the fact that he was born under the sign of the sun, Luther ex-

claimed: "I care not so much about your SOL. I am a peasant's son. My father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were honest peasants."—"Yes," replied Melanchthon, "in the village, too, you would have been a leader, either chief officer of the village or head farm-hand over the others."—"But," exclaimed Luther triumphantly, "I have become a bachelor of arts, a master, a monk,—that was not written in the stars; then I pulled the Pope's hair and he pulled mine, I took a nun to wife and begat children with her. Who saw those things in the stars?" And again Melanchthon continued in his astrological interpretations, beginning about Emperor Charles and declared it was ordained that he should die in 1584. Then Luther burst out violently: "The world will not endure as long as that. For if we beat back the Turk, the prophecy of Daniel will be fulfilled and the end at hand. Then the day of judgment is surely at our doors."

When Melanchthon fell dangerously ill, Luther visited him. On seeing the signs of approaching death in the face of his dear friend and co-worker, Luther turned toward the window and prayed that the Lord should spare his faithful servant's life. Then he addressed the patient, saying: "Be of good cheer, Philip, thou shalt not die!" Melanchthon recovered and Luther wrote triumphantly that "with God's help he would have brought the Master Philip back from the grave."

How amiable he is as the father of his family! When his little children stood at the table and looked longingly at the fruit and peaches he said: "Who wants to see the image of one that is happy in hope, he has here the true counterfeit. Oh, that we might behold the

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LUTHER AT THE COFFIN OF HIS DAUGHTER MAGDALEN. (After Gustav König.)

day of doom thus merrily! Adam and Eve no doubt had much better fruit, ours are mere crab-apples by comparison. The serpent, too, I think, was then a most beautiful creature, kindly and charming; it still wears its little crown, but after the curse it lost its feet and its handsome body." So he watched his little son of three years playing and talking to himself: "This child is like a drunken man, it knows not that it lives, and yet it lives securely and merrily on, skipping and jumping. Such children like to be in large wide apartments where they have room." And he drew the child to him: "You are our Lord's little fool, under his grace and forgiveness of sins, not under the law; you are not afraid, you are secure and care about nothing; as you act, is the uncorrupted way. Parents are always fondest of the youngest children; my little Martin is my dearest treasure, such little children require most the care and love of the parents. Hence, the love of parents always descends in the simplest way. How must Abraham have felt when he was about to sacrifice his youngest and dearest son? He could not have said anything about it to Sarah. That errand must have been hard to him."

His beloved daughter Magdalen lay at the point of death, and he complained: "I love her very dearly, but, dear Lord, since it is Thy will, that Thou wilt take her hence, I will gladly know her to be with Thee. Magdalen, my little daughter, you would gladly remain here with your father and you will also gladly go to the Father beyond?" And the child said: "Yes, dear father, as God wills."

And when she died, the father knelt by the bedside

weeping bitterly, and prayed that God might save her. And she went to sleep in her father's arms.

And when the people came to help bury the body, and spoke to the doctor according to the custom, he said: "I am happy in the spirit, but the flesh is not satisfied; this parting vexes one above all measure. It is strange to know that she is in peace and happiness, and yet to be so sad."

His *dominus* or lord Catharine, as he was fond of calling his wife in letters to friends, speedily developed into an efficient housewife. And she had no little trouble. Little children, the husband often ailing, a number of boarders, teachers and poor students, an ever open house, from which scholarly or noble guests were seldom absent; and with all that, a scanty household and a husband who would rather give than receive, and who, in his zeal, on one occasion, when she was lying in childbed, even took the silverware given to the children by their godparents in order to give alms. In 1527, Luther was unable to advance eight florins to his former prior and friend Briesger. Sadly he wrote to him: "Three little silver cups (wedding presents) are in pawn for fifty florins, the fourth has been sold, the year has brought debts of one hundred florins. Lucas Cranach refuses to take my bail any longer so that I may not ruin myself completely."

Sometimes Luther declined presents, even such as were offered by his sovereign; but it appears that his regard for wife and children instilled in him some practical ideas in later years. When he died, his estate amounted, approximately, to eight or nine thousand florins, com-

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LUTHER IN THE BOSOM OF HIS FAMILY. (After Spangenberg.)

prising a little country place, a big garden, and two houses. It was surely the merit of Frau Catharine principally.

From the way in which Luther treated her we see how happy his domestic life was. If he made allusions to the profuse talk of women he had little cause, for he was not a man himself by any means that could be called chary of words. If she is heartily glad to be able to serve up all kinds of fish from the little lake in their garden, the doctor in turn is happy at her joy and does not fail to append to it a pleasing reflexion on the happiness of modest wants. Or, if reading the psalter becomes too tedious for her and she replies that she hears enough of sanctification, that she reads much every day and can also speak about it, but that God only wants her to act accordingly, the doctor at this sensible answer sighs: "So does dissatisfaction with the word of God begin, there will come many new books and the Scriptures will be thrown into the corner again."

But this firm relationship of two good persons was, for a long time, not without secret suffering. We can only surmise at what was gnawing at the heart of the wife if, as late as 1527, in a dangerous illness, Luther took a last farewell of her with the words: "You are my honored and legitimate wife, so you shall assuredly esteem yourself."

Similarly as with those dear to him, Luther also conversed with the high powers of his faith. All the good figures from the Bible were to him like true friends, his vivid imagination had shaped their natures familiarly and he loved to picture to himself their circumstances

with the ingenuousness of a child. When Veit Dietrich asked him what kind of a person the apostle Paul might have been, Luther quickly replied: "He was an insignificant, slim little man like Philippus Melanchthon." The Virgin Mary was to him a graceful picture. "She was a fine girl," he said admiringly, "she must have had a good voice." And the Saviour he loved best to imagine as a child in the house of his parents, carrying the meal to the father in the wood-yard, and Mary asking as he staid too long: "Where have you been so long, my little one?" The Saviour should not be imagined on the rainbow with a halo, not as the executor of the law—that conception is too lofty and terrible for man—only as the poor sufferer living among sinners and dying for them.

His God, also, was to him, at all times, master of the house and father. He loved to delve into the economy of nature. He indulges in astonished reflexion how much wood God must create. "No one can calculate what God needs only to feed the sparrows and useless birds; they cost him more in a year than the income of the King of France. And then, think of all the other things."

"God understands all trades. In his tailoring he makes for the stag a coat that lasts a hundred years. As a shoemaker he gives him shoes for his feet, and in the sun he is a cook."

"He could well get rich if he desired, if he stopped the sun, enclosed the air, if he threatened death to the Pope, the Emperor, the bishops, and doctors unless they paid him a hundred thousand florins at once. But he does not do so, and we are ungrateful beasts."

And he seriously reflects where the food for so many people comes from. Old Hans Luther had asserted there were more men than sheaves of grain; the doctor, on the contrary, believed that more sheaves grew than men, but more men than shocks of grain; a shock yields scarcely a bushel and a man cannot live on that for a year.

Even a heap of manure invited cordial reflexion: "God has to clear away as much as he has to create. If he did not continually clean up, men would long since have filled up the world with refuse."

And if God often punishes the pious more severely than the impious, he acts like a serious master of the house who thrashes his son more frequently than the hired servant. But while he silently gathers a treasure as an inheritance for the son, the hired man is at last discharged. And cheerfully he draws the conclusion: "If our Lord and Master can pardon me for having vexed him for well nigh twenty years by reading masses, he can also put to my credit that at times I have quaffed a good drink in his honor. May the world construe it as it pleases."

He also wondered a great deal that God was so angry with the Jews. "For fifteen hundred years they have been praying violently, with earnestness and great zeal, as their little books of prayer show, and all through that time he does not answer them with a little word. If I could pray as they pray I would give two hundred florins' worth of books. It must be a great, unutterable wrath. Oh, dear Lord, rather punish with pestilence than keep so silent."

Like a child, Luther prayed every morning and evening, often in the day, even during meals. Prayers which

he knew by heart, he repeated again and again with fervent devotion, preferring the Lord's Prayer; then again he recited to God the little catechism; he always carried the psalter with him, which served him as his book of prayer. When he was in passionate anxiety his prayer became a storm, a wrestling with God, the power, greatness, and holy simplicity of which it is difficult to compare with other human emotions. At such times he was the son lying in despair at the feet of his father, or the faithful servant imploring his sovereign. For his conviction was unchangeable that it was possible to influence the resolutions of God by prayers and admonitions. And thus in his prayer there is an alternate outpouring of emotion and complaint, nay, serious exhortations.

STRUGGLES WITH THE DEVIL.

AS GOD was the source of all that was good, so to Luther the Devil was the cause of all that was noxious and evil. Luther came from a cottage in which there was still felt, as in the ancient times, the awful presence of the spirits of the pine forests and the sombre cleft of the earth which was held to give access to the veins of metal in the mountains. Surely the imagination of the boy was often engaged with obscure traditions of ancient heathen beliefs. He was accustomed to feel supernatural powers in the terrors of nature as in the lives of men. When he turned monk these recollections of childhood darkened into the Biblical idea of the Devil, but the busy tempter who lurked everywhere in the life of man always retained, in Luther's belief, somewhat of the nature of the spirits of ancient Teutonic heathendom.

In Luther's Table Talks, which were taken down by his companions, the Devil causes the dangerous storms, while an angel produces the pleasant winds, even as in ancient Teutonic belief a giant eagle sat at the boundary of the world and caused the winds by flapping his wings. Or, he sits under a bridge in the form of a nixie and draws girls into the water whom he forces into marriage.

He serves in the convent as a domestic sprite, blows the fire into a blaze as a goblin, as a dwarf he puts his changelings into the cradles of men, as a nightmare he misleads the sleepers to climb the roof, and as a noisy hobgoblin tumbles things around in the rooms. By this last thing he particularly disturbed Luther several times.

The ink spot in the Wartburg is not sufficiently authenticated, but Luther did tell of a disagreeable noise which Satan made at that place by night with a bag of hazel nuts.

In the monastery at Wittenberg, also, when Luther studied in the refectory at night the Devil kept up a noise in the church hall below him until Luther packed up his books and went to bed. Afterwards he was vexed because he did not defy the "buffoon."

He did not care much about this kind of deviltry. He called those which manifested themselves in such a way bad devils. He held that there were innumerable devils. "Not all of them little devils, but there are land devils and devil princes who are experienced and have practised for a very long time, over five thousand years, and have become most shrewd and cunning." "We," he said, "have the big devils, who are doctors of divinity; the Turks and papists have bad and petty devils, who are not theological but juridical devils." Everything bad on earth, all diseases, came from them.

Luther had a strong suspicion that the dizziness which troubled him for a long time was not natural. As to fires, "wherever a fire blazes up, there sits every time a little devil and blows into the flame." Failure of crops and war—"and if God had not given us the dear holy

angels for guardians and arquebusiers who are drawn up about us like a bulwark of waggons it would soon be all over with us."

Being quick to picture characteristic things in detail, he knew that the Devil was haughty and could not bear to be treated with contempt. He therefore often gave the advice to drive him off by ridicule and mocking questions. Satan was also a mournful spirit and could not tolerate cheerful music.

The most terrible work of the Devil, according to Luther, was that which he did within the human soul. There he inspired not only impure thoughts, but also doubt, melancholy, and sadness. All that he uttered so firmly and cheerfully first weighed with fearful force on Luther's sensitive conscience. At night, especially, when he awoke, the Devil stood sneering at his couch and whispered terrifying things to him, and his mind struggled for liberty, often in vain, for a long time. And it is remarkable how this son of the sixteenth century proceeded in such internal struggles. Sometimes a certain gesture by which in those days both prince and peasant expressed sovereign contempt helped where nothing else would help. But his rising good humor did not always set him free. Every new research into the Scripture, every important sermon on a new subject threw him into fresh struggles of conscience. At such times he would become so excited that his mind was incapable of methodical thought, and he would live in fear for days at a time. While the question of monks and nuns occupied him, he found a passage in the Bible which, as he thought in his excitement, proved him in the wrong. His heart sank in his bosom; he was al-

most strangled by the Devil. Bugenhagen happening to visit him, Luther led him out into the hallway and showed him the threatening passage. And Bugenhagen, probably himself infected by the hasty manner of his friend, also began to doubt, without suspecting the torments which Luther suffered. Then, for the first time, Luther became frightened. A terrible night passed. Next morning Bugenhagen entered once more. "I am very angry," he said, "I have just examined the text carefully, and find the passage has altogether a different meaning." "And it is true," Luther related later, "it was a ridiculous argument. Yes, ridiculous for him who is in possession of his senses and not in temptation."

He often complained to his friends of the terrors of these struggles which the Devil caused him. "He never was so fearful and angry from the beginning as he is now at the end of the world. I feel him very plainly. He sleeps closer to me than my Katie—that is, he gives me more unrest than she does joy."

Luther did not weary of calling the Pope the Antichrist, and the papal practices devilish. But upon closer examination there will be discovered, even back of this hatred of the Devil, that indelible piety in which the loyal soul of the man was bound to the old Church. What became scruples to him were often only pious recollections from the time of his youth which stood in violent opposition to the changes he had undergone as a man.

THE TRAGIC ELEMENT IN LUTHER'S LIFE.

NO MAN is transformed entirely by the great thoughts and acts of his later life as a man. We are not made quite new by new activity; our inner life is made up of the sum of all the thoughts and emotions that we have ever had. He who is chosen by fate to create the greatest new things by destroying great things that are old, will destroy and ruin, at the same time, part of his own life. He must violate duties to fulfil greater duties. The more conscientious he is, the more deeply will he feel in his inmost nature the incision he has made into the order of the world. That is the secret pain, nay, the repentance, of every great historical character. There have been few mortals who felt this pain so deeply as Luther. And the great thing in him is just this, that he was never prevented by such pain from doing the boldest acts. To us, however, this appears as a tragic element in his inner life.

And another tragic element, the most fateful for him, lay in the attitude which he was compelled himself to occupy with reference to his own teachings. He had left to his people only the authority of the Scripture; with fervor he clutched its words as the only safe anchor for the

human race. Before him, the Pope and his hierarchy had interpreted, misconstrued, supplemented the words of the Scripture; now he was placed in a similar position. Together with a circle of dependent friends, he was compelled to assume the prerogative of rightly understanding the words of the Scripture and applying them properly to the life of his time. It was a superhuman task, and he who took it upon himself must of necessity become the victim of some of the evils against which he had himself made such a grand fight in the Catholic Church.

Firmly linked and brazen was the structure of his mind; he was created a ruler if ever mortal man was, but the very gigantic and demon-like quality of his will must at times make him a tyrant. If, nevertheless, on several important occasions, he practised toleration, either by self-restraint or with inward freedom, it was but the happy influence of his good nature that made itself felt. But not infrequently he became the pope of the Protestants. There was no choice for him or for his people.

In recent times, he has been blamed for having done so little to invite the coöperation of the laity by a Presbyterian constitution. Never was reproach more unjust. What was possible in Switzerland with vigorous, free communities of peasants, was entirely impracticable in Germany. The citizens of the bigger cities alone possessed the intelligence and strength to control the Protestant clergy; but almost nine-tenths of the evangelical denomination consisted of down-trodden farming people, who were, as a rule, indifferent and obstinate and had become savage since the peasant wars. The new Church was

obliged to force its discipline upon them as upon neglected children.

Whoever doubts these assertions, may look at the reports of inspections and observe the incessant complaints of the various reformers at the rudeness of their poor congregations.

But still other things pressed upon the great man. The ruler of the souls of the German people sat in a little town among poor university professors and students, among feeble citizens of whom he often had occasion to complain. He was not spared the inconveniences of life in a little provincial town, the distasteful disputes with petty scholars and clumsy neighbors; and there was much in his nature that made him particularly irritable at such things. No man carries in himself with impunity the consciousness of being a preferred instrument of God; he who lives thus no longer fits into the narrow and small structure of civil society.

Had not Luther been, at the bottom of his heart, modest, and in intercourse with others infinitely good-natured, he must have seemed insufferable to the sober people of common sense who stood cool beside him. Thus it happened only occasionally that he had a violent conflict with the citizens, the municipal authorities, the legal faculty of his university, the councilors of his sovereign. He was not always right, but he almost invariably carried his point against them, for seldom did any one dare defy his ponderous wrath.

In addition, he was a victim of severe bodily ailments. During the last years of his life their frequent recurrence had exhausted even his immense vitality; he

felt it most painfully and prayed incessantly to his God to take him unto himself. He was not yet an old man in years, but he appeared old to himself, old and hoary, and not at home in a strange terrestrial world. These particular years, not rich in great events, made difficult by political and municipal quarrels, filled with bitterness and hours of mourning, should fill with sympathy all who contemplate the life of the great man without prejudice. The blaze of his life had warmed his entire people, called forth in millions the beginnings of a higher human development, and the blessings remained to millions. He felt at last little else himself than the torments. Once he had hoped joyfully to die as a martyr, now he desired the repose of the grave like a persistent, weary workman of many years. That, also, is a tragic fate.

But his greatest pain lay in the attitude which he himself was forced to take toward his own doctrine. He had founded a new church on his pure gospel, had given incomparably greater worth to the mind and conscience of the people. About him blossomed a new life, increased prosperity, many valuable arts, painting and music, comfortable enjoyment of life, finer culture among the citizen classes. And yet there was something in the air, weird and boding destruction. The rulers were in fierce discord, foreign powers on the march against the people, the Emperor from Spain, the Pope from Rome, the Turk from the Mediterranean; the visionaries and rioters powerful, the hierarchy not yet fallen. His very gospel, had it cemented the nation together for greater unity and power? Greater was the discord become, upon the worldly interests of certain princes would the future of his church de-

pend. And he knew even the best ones among them. Something horrible was approaching, the Scripture was about to be fulfilled, the day of doom was at hand. After that, however, God will build a new world, more beautiful, splendid, and pure, full of peace and bliss, a world in which there would no more be a devil, where every human soul would find more pleasure in the flowers and fruit of the new trees of heaven than the present generation takes in gold and silver, where the finest of the arts, music, would sound in tones much more enchanting than the most magnificent song of good chanters in this world. There the good would find all their dear ones again whom they had lost here below.

The yearning of the human heart for ideal purity of existence grew ever more irresistible in him. If he expected the end of the world it was a faint recollection of the people from its remotest antiquity still hanging in the mental sky of the new reformer. And yet it was, at the same time, a prophetic foreboding of the near future. It was not the end of the world that was preparing, but the Thirty Years' War.

Thus Luther died.

When the hearse with Luther's body drove through the Thuringian lands all the bells tolled in village and city, and people crowded sobbing around his coffin. It was a good part of the strength of the people that was buried with this man. And Philip Melanchthon said in the church of the castle at Wittenberg over the body: "Every one who understood him aright must witness that he was a very kind man, in all speech gracious, kind, and lovable, and not at all forward, stormy, self-

willed, or quarrelsome. And yet there was an earnestness and bravery in his words and actions, as should be in such a man. His heart was true and free of guile. The severity which he used in his writings against enemies of the doctrine came not from a quarrelsome or spiteful mind, but from great earnestness and zeal for the truth. He showed great courage and manliness and was not frightened by a little rushing sound. He was not intimidated by threats, danger, or terror. He was also of such high and keen understanding that he alone could, in confused, obscure, and difficult disputes, see quickly what was to be advised and done. Nor was he, as some perhaps have thought, so inattentive as not to have learned how it stood everywhere about the government. He knew right well how the government is constituted, and paid attention with special diligence to the minds and wishes of the people with whom he had to do. But we should keep this, our dear father, in our memories steadily and forever and never leave him from our hearts."

Such was Luther. A titanic nature, his mind hard to move and sharply limited, his will powerful and well tempered, his morality pure, his heart full of love. Because after him no other man arose strong enough to be a leader of the nation, the German people lost their dominion on the earth for centuries. But the spiritual supremacy of the German race rests upon him. But Luther's influence is not limited to the history of his own people; he is the central figure of the age of the Reformation, and his spirit is still moving in the life of all the Protestant nations.

THE AGE OF THE REFORMATION. (After Kaulbach.)

A LETTER OF LUTHER TO THE PRINCE ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

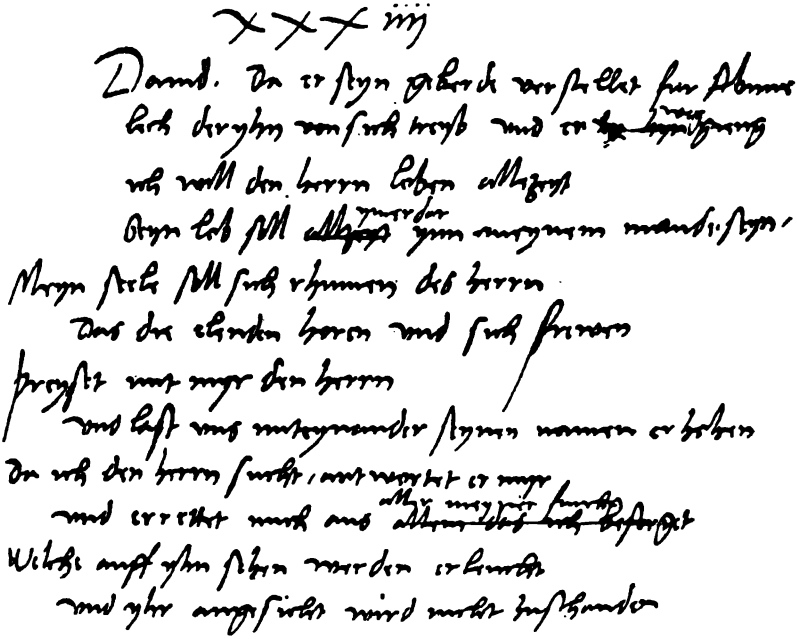
TO LET LUTHER, in conclusion, speak for himself, there may be subjoined here a letter to the Prince-Elector Frederick the Wise, written in those days in which Luther had his whole strength most powerfully concentrated. The prudent Prince had ordered him to remain at the Wartburg, as he could not protect him at Wittenberg, for the angry Duke of Saxony, his cousin, would at once insist upon executing the sentence against the outlawed Luther. Luther wrote thus to his sovereign:

"Most serene and august Prince-Elector, most gracious Lord:—Your Princely Grace's writing and gracious warning reached me Friday evening, when I meant to ride away Sunday morning. That your Princely Grace has the very best intentions, requires neither proof nor witness for me, for I hold myself convinced thereof as far as human knowledge goes.

"But in my affair, most gracious lord, I answer thus: Your Princely Grace knows, or, if you do not know, I herewith make known to you, that I have the Gospel, not from men, but alone from Heaven, through our Lord Jesus Christ, so that I could well have praised

and written myself a servant and evangelist, which I mean to do from this time forward. That I offered myself for hearing and judgment, however, was done not because I doubted the truth, but from excessive humility, to win over the others. I have done enough for your Princely Grace by having vacated my place this year to please your Princely Grace. For the Devil knows very well that I did it through no fear. He saw my heart well when I arrived at Worms, for had I known that as many devils were in wait for me as there are tiles on the roofs, I should still have leaped among them with joy.

"Now, Duke George is very unlike even to a single devil. And since the Father of inscrutable mercy has by the Gospel made us joyful masters over all devils and death and has given us the wealth of confidence that we may say to him, 'Dearly beloved Father,' your Princely Grace may yourself conjecture that it would be the highest disgrace to such a Father if we did not have confidence in Him that we are also masters of Duke George's wrath. As for myself, I know well I would ride right into his Leipsic—your Princely Grace will pardon my foolish speech—though it should, for nine days, rain only Dukes George, and each one was nine times as furious as this one. He thinks my Master Christ a man wattled together of straw, which this my master and myself may well suffer for a while. But I will not conceal from your Princely Grace that I have prayed and wept for Duke George not once but very often that God might enlighten him. I will pray and weep once more, afterwards nevermore. And I beg your Princely Grace will also help and have prayers said that we may turn from him the misfor-



xxxiiii

David. Da er seyn geberde verstellet für Abime
lech der yhn von sich triyb vnd er weg (hyn) ging
ich will den Herrn loben allezeyt
Seyn lob soll ymerdar (allzeit) ynn meynem munde seyn.
Meyn seele soll sich rühmen des Herrn
das die elenden hören vnd sich frewen.
Preiset mit myr den Herrn
vnd last vns miteynander seynen namen erhöhen
Da ich den Herrn sucht, antwortet er myr
vnd errettet mich aus aller meyner furcht (allem das ich besorgt)
Welche aupf yhn sehen werden erleucht
vnd yhr angesicht wird nicht zu schanden

tune which, O Lord God! is moving upon him without intermission. I might strangle Duke George quickly with a word if that would end the matter.

"This is written to your Princely Grace in the thought that you know that I am coming to Wittenberg under much higher protection than that of the Prince-Elector. Nor is it in my mind to require protection from your Princely Grace. Nay, I deem I could protect your Princely Grace more than you could protect me. Even if I knew your Princely Grace could and would protect me I should not come; in this matter no sword can either counsel or help; God must here work alone without any human assistance. Hence, he who believes best will here protect best.

"Since, then, I feel that your Princely Grace is still very weak in the faith, I can nowise regard your Princely Grace as the man who could protect or save me.

"Since your Princely Grace desires to know what to do in this matter, particularly as you think you have done far too little, I answer most humbly your Princely Grace has already done entirely too much and ought to do nothing. For God will not and cannot suffer your care and action or mine. He wants it left to Himself and none other. Your Princely Grace may govern yourself accordingly.

"If your Princely Grace believe this you will be secure and have peace; if you do not believe, still I believe and must allow the lack of faith of your Princely Grace to torment itself with that care which all who lack faith justly suffer. Since, then, I will not follow your Princely Grace, you will be excused before God should I be cap-

tured or killed. Before men, your Princely Grace should conduct yourself in this wise. As a prince-elector, you should be obedient to authority and allow imperial majesty to do in your cities and lands in regard to life and property as is proper according to the laws of the empire, and must not defend yourself or resist, nor seek opposition or any obstacle against that power should it want to take or kill me. For no one shall break that power but He alone that instituted it, otherwise it is rebellious and is against God. I hope, however, they will use reason and understand that your Princely Grace was born in too lofty a cradle to become my jailor. If your Princely Grace leave the gate open and observe the safe-conduct of the Prince-Elector, if the enemies themselves come to fetch me, or their emissaries, your Princely Grace will have done enough to satisfy obedience. They cannot require more of your Princely Grace than that they want to learn of the whereabouts of Luther from your Princely Grace. And that they shall have without care, labor, or danger to your Princely Grace. For Christ did not teach me to be a Christian to the injury of another. Should they be so unreasonable, however, as to order that your Princely Grace yourself lay hands on me, I shall then tell you what is to be done. I will secure your Princely Grace from injury and danger of body, goods, and soul in my cause, whether your Princely Grace believe this or not.

"So I commend your Princely Grace to the mercy of God; we will discuss further measures when it becomes necessary. For I have made this writing ready hurriedly that your Princely Grace may not be seized with sadness

at the rumor of my arrival, for I must and shall become a solace to all and not an injury if I would be a true Christian. He is another than Duke George with Whom I am treating; He knows me quite well and I know Him not ill. If your Princely Grace had faith you would see the glory of God. But because you do not yet believe, you have not yet seen anything. God be loved and praised forevermore. Amen.

"Given at Borna, in presence of the guide on Ash Wednesday, A. D. 1522.

"Your Princely Grace's humble servant,

"MARTIN LUTHER."

INDEX.

Age of the Reformation, 122.
Amsdorf, Nicolaus, 47, 82, 97.
Anabaptists, 103.
Answer to the Diet, 53.
Astrological interpretations, Melanchthon's, 106.
Augsburg, Confession of, 102.

Bible, the, 83, 109.
Blaurer, Ambrosius, 62, 68.
Bora. See Catharine.
Brotherhoods, pious, 9.
Brunswick, Henry of, 44.
Burned the papal bull, 45.

Cajetanus, 33, 34, 38.
Catharine of Bora, 88, 97, 99, 105, 108, 109.
Catharinus, Ambrosius, 46.
Catholic Church, Reformer of the, 1.
Charles, Emperor, 106.
Chase, 73.
Chorister, 7.
Coburg, 103.
Cochlaeus, 43.
Confession of Augsburg, 102.
Cotta, Frau, 7.
Cranach, Lucas, 46, 97, 108.

Devil, the, 113, 124.
Diet of Worms, 48, 50.
Dietrich, Veit, 7.

Eck, 34, 37, 41, 43, 85.
Emser, Jerome, 38, 43, 46.
Erasmus, 29.
Estate, Luther's, 108.

Father, Luther's, 5, 96.
Florentina, 89.
Frederick the Wise, Prince-Elector, 12, 29, 46, 48, 58.
Frundsberg, 50.

George, Duke, of Saxony, 72, 127.
Glapio, 47.

Hampden, 2.
Hans Luther, 5, 6, 98, 111.
Hapsburger, 58.
Henry VIII., 43.
Hesse, Landgrave of, 95.
Huss, 11, 47.
Hutton, 61, 79, 80, 91.

Indulgences, 11.
Ink Spot, 114.

Jonas, Jodocus, 82.

Karlstadt, 86.
Kessler, Johannes, 74.

Landgrave of Hesse, 95.
Leo X., letter to, 35.
Letter, to Leo X., 35; to the Pope, 36, 37; to the Prince-Elector of Saxony, 123.
Letters, Luther's, to his little son, 103.

Magdalen, 107.
Mary, the Virgin, 112.
Mayence, Archbishop of, 98.
Mecum, Frederick (Myconius), 13 et seq., 24.

Melanchthon, Philip, 7, 27, 31, 33, 71, 72, 76, 82, 86, 88, 102, 105, 121; his astrological interpretations, 106.
Miltitz, 33, 34, 37, 39.
Murner, 43.
Myconius, Frederick (Mecum), 13 et seq., 24.

Nimbechen, 88.

Papal bull, burned, 45.
Pappenheim, Ulrich von, 50, 51.
Pardons, 11.
Paterfamilias, 103.
Paul, Apostle, 110.
Periods, three, 3.
Pope, letter to the, 36, 37.
Prayers, 111, 112.
Professor, at Wittenberg, 28; of theology, 30.

Reformation, Age of the, 122.
Reichenbach, Mayor, 97.
Reuchlin, 29.
Richard of Treves, 69.
Rufus, Mutianus, 29.

Satan, 73.
School education, 101.
Schurf, Augustin, 76, 82.
Schurf, Jerome, 76, 81, 82.
Sickingen, 47.
Spalatin, 29, 35, 38, 47, 72, 87.
Staupitz, 25, 30, 35, 88.
Sturm, Caspar, 47.
Swiss students, 76.

Tauler, 26.
Tetzel, 12, 14, 15, 18, 34, 61, 91.
Theses, 30.
Tripartite careers, 3.
Turks, the, 114.

Virgin Mary, the, 110.

Wartburg, 71.
Wittenberg, 37.
Wittenberg professor, 28.
Worms, Diet of, 48, 50.

Zeschaus, 88.
Zwingli, 86, 103.

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